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THE COUNTESS OF WARWICK.

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GIPSIES.

THERE are certain races, as certain subjects, about which a strange fascination has always hung—an attraction as inexplicable to those not influenced by it as was the high price given for a Roman urn to the practical-minded old lady who attended a sale. The coveted antique being knocked down at a high price, the bewildered dame was heard to murmur, "Save us all; if the parrich pot gangs at that, what will the kettle sell for!" The careful housewife could not enter into the antiquary's love for

"Auld nick-nackets,
Rusty ain caps, and jinglin jackets,
And parritch pats, and auld saut-buckets,
Afore the flude."

To some minds the glamour which has for centuries surrounded the gipsy race is equally perplexing. Grave historian, studious philologist, careful collector of folk-lore, have found the study of this "vagrom" race as attractive as have the poet and the novelist. It was as a gipsy that James V. of Scotland loved to roam in disguise; a gipsy who is the central figure of many poems and romances, even in the case of writers like Sir Walter Scott, George Eliot, and Longfellow. Two modern writers are proud to boast themselves as "romany ryes"—members by adoption, if not by birth, of that gipsy race with whom they have so much consorted, and of whom they write so admirably, even affectionately. Mr. Leland tells how he carefully studied the Roman language, taking as his teacher

almost said as wearisome—a question as is the authorship of Junius. The gipsies are variously said to be the remnant of the lost tribes; to be the descendants of the Hindoos whom Timour expelled from India in 1399; to be a race on whom some mysterious curse, which entails perpetual vagabondage, has been laid—every writer upon gipsies has his favourite theory on this subject. The singular fact remains that, for at least four centuries, this strange race has been found wandering all over Europe, speaking its own language, holding to its own manners and customs, cherishing many pagan rites and superstitions, even when its members are professedly Christians. As the negro who is loudest at prayer meetings often practises Voodoo worship in privacy, and cherishes as firm a faith in Obi and spells as ever did his openly heathen forefathers, so the comparatively civilised modern gipsy, who has no objection to allow his children to attend a school, and will even courteously welcome a religious teacher in his tent, clings to much gipsy sorcery still.

Some interesting papers appeared in *Good Words* in 1868, being the experiences of a lady who visited a gipsy encampment near Edinburgh for the purpose of acting as a kind of Scripture reader to these wanderers, who appear to have still held, in spiritual matters, much the same creed as Scott (in "Quentin Durward") puts into the mouth of Hayraddin, the gipsy of the fifteenth century. This lady records her surprise at finding that, amid all the squalor and poverty of the gipsies'



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A GIPSY CARAVAN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

an old gipsy, "who, like Regnar Lodbrog, had never slept under a fixed roof unless he took a nap in a tavern or stable, whose whole life had been utterly that of a gipsy at the roads and fairs, by wood and wold, as outlaws use to do." Under this able tuition the American author records that he speedily made such linguistic progress as to be able to converse with any gipsy in their own tongue, to be recognised as an all round gipsy rye in many lands, and even to be strongly advised by one of his gipsy friends to start "on the drum" (i.e., road) with them in a small donkey cart over the hills and far away for a pleasant summer excursion, the expenses of which, it was confidently expected, the party could easily defray by fortune-telling. It is singular, in reading the works of both Mr. Borrow and Mr. Leland, to note how, from their accounts, gipsies yet flourish and abound among us. The speculative builder, in covering many country places with streets and villas, has driven away the once familiar spectacle of the gipsy encampment from close vicinity to our streets. Commons and waste lands, at least near large towns, are yearly becoming rarer, and if not actually built over, have passed into the conservancy of public bodies, who have as little sympathy with vagrom men as Dogberry himself. Yet, but a few years back, Gipsy Lane at West End, Hampstead, rarely lacked its GIPSY CARAVAN, and even yet an occasional gipsy cart may be seen on the strip of waste land outside Hampstead Cemetery. But it is seldom that the gipsy camp—with tents—is seen in the vicinity of towns, possibly because these wanderers are aware that they are now so liable to be moved on, that it is wiser to remain in their caravan, which only requires the trouble of harnessing the horse to be placed again on the road.

The origin of the gipsy race is as mysterious—we had

tents, solid silver plate and chic were occasionally in use—"a silversmith in Edinburgh told my friend that the most expensive silver tea service in his shop was bought and paid for by a gipsy matron."

It is not the least of the mysteries that surround this strange people that they usually appear to obtain money without the ordinary prosaic method of working hard for it; for the gipsy trades—tinkering and the like—are usually pursued in a very desultory fashion. Fortune-telling may possibly prove more profitable than outside "gorgios" wot of, and farmers' wives in the vicinity of a gipsy camp oftentimes murmur about vanished poultry and missing linen; yet it is difficult to understand how all these resources bring in enough to enable gipsy wanderers to purchase silver plate or to "spend £5 on their Christmas dinner," as one of the patriarchs of the Scotch encampment boasted to have done. It is true that the kind lady missionary records, regretfully, "in the case of this family their final moonlight flitting was tarnished with the disgrace of having, as a primary object, escaped from debt and debt's penalties."

Among themselves, and in dealing with those to whom they attach themselves, gipsies, according to their admirers, exhibit remarkable honesty, though the outside public does not always give them this character.

Is it a proof that magic powers still reside among these Bohemians that the gipsy race have the power of so fascinating and interesting all who approach them closely? Crabb is almost the only writer who has studied them intimately and then speaks badly of them. "Only pretty Fanny's way" is the excuse usually urged by many a kindly describer of this strange people when confronted with some of their traits which are less

admirable than could be wished. There are countless legends of individuals (like the two writers we have named) who were so drawn by affection towards the gipsies that they voluntarily associated themselves with these dwellers in tents, one Scotch laird of a past century having, according to tradition, forsaken lands and home to dwell permanently with the gipsy race, marrying a Romany bride, and becoming the father of children by her. An Act was passed against the itinerancy of the gipsies in 1530, and, in the reign of Charles I., "thirteen persons were executed at one assize for having associated with gipsies for a month contrary to the Statute." A gipsy encampment at Norwood was broken up in the spring of 1797, and the gipsies dealt with as vagrants. Yet, despite this harsh legislation, gipsies remained still in England, though not in the same numbers as in Spain, where over 120,000 are said to have been living before 1800.

Mr. Ralston, some years ago, published an interesting account of a community of French gipsies who resided in Paris in the late sixties. These Bohemians were sufficiently civilised to inhabit apartments, at least for a portion of the year, and

invariably met together every Christmas. Though most of the elders of this community were professedly Catholics, they still retained their peculiar language, and many of their ancient rites and customs, as faithfully as their peculiar personal traits. Some members of this gipsy band gained their living by sitting to Paris artists, the Princess Mathilde often employing one young girl as a model; the others wandered about in various itinerant trades, one patriarch inhabiting a little caravan, which he was only permitted to stable on waste ground near Paris on payment of what he considered the exorbitant rent of five francs a month. This man told Mr. Ralston that "all the English gipsies who are in the neighbourhood of London meet once a year in a kind of council room which they keep for that purpose," and added that he intended coming over to England one year to join in this race conference. There is something obnoxious to our preconceived ideas of gipsy tastes in the thought of the annual meeting being held in a "room" under a roof. Salisbury Plain would seem a fitter locale for this nomad race to assemble themselves upon.

LUCY HARDY.

COUNTRY LIFE

ILLUSTRATED.

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COUNTRY NOTES.

A WELCOME improvement in the weather has to be recorded as having taken place during the past week. A change from the heavy rain lately experienced was much needed, and it has fortunately come in time to be of immense service to many farmers whose harvesting was not completed. A considerable quantity of corn was still out, and grave doubts were felt as to the possibility of gathering it in anything like good condition, if any lengthened spell of wet weather had supervened. These fears are now happily dispelled. With corn at its present price, to have lost any of his crop by unfavourable weather would have been a sore trial to the already overburdened agriculturist.

It is pleasing to find that in the hop districts the pessimistic views with which the hop crop has been regarded in many quarters are not shared by those most directly interested. The crop certainly is a short one, but it should be remembered that it is not always the heaviest crop, with its attendant low price, which pays the cultivator best, although, of course, a restricted supply presses hardly on the pickers. Many of the poorest class in London regard hop-picking as their only means of getting a change and a supply of fresh air to brace them for their year's labours, but this season there are many more pickers than are required. The home dwellers, as the inhabitants of the neighbourhood are called, have lately taken to picking much more freely than formerly, the labour market is overstocked, and with the small crop and short season, from a picker's point of view, the present picking is not a success, however the growers may regard it.

The dog muzzling muddle is responsible for many strange decisions in the courts, but perhaps the hardest riddle ever sprung upon a long-suffering public is the question, "When is a dog out for a walk and when is he taking exercise?" This riddle arises from the fact that a man, summoned for leading three greyhounds, unmuzzled, contended, in his defence, that the dogs were not "out for a walk," but "taking exercise," which was quite a different thing, and his curious contention was upheld by the magistrate, and no conviction or penalty followed. Another case which caused some amusement a short time ago, was that in which a magistrate decided that as greyhounds were sporting dogs and "hunted in packs," they were exempt from muzzling. "A pack of greyhounds" hunting would make a unique illustration.

The whiting pout, as everybody knows, is distinguished by four or five dark bars, resembling those of the perch. A correspondent informs me of the interesting fact that "on a large number caught at Deal last week these usual dark bars were entirely missing. This," he adds, "was probably owing to the thick water following a heavy south-west gale. But when the fish were thrown into the fish tubs (exposed to the sun's rays) these

marks gradually made their reappearance. This loss of colour in dark water has long been known to occur with fresh water fish, but I have not heard of its being recorded of salt water fishes before. Some time ago a pike taken in the Sussex Stour was bright yellow on the back, but after being landed on the bank for half an hour was found to be of the usual dark green colour. The change is due to the expansion of the chromatophores, or colour-bearing cells, owing to the action of the light thereon."

The members of the Piscatorial Society gave doleful accounts last Monday evening of lack of sport, and complaints of entirely blank days were general. The sea-trout fishing this year seems to have been very poor, as more than one speaker had during his holiday caught none at all. But your ardent fisherman is not to be depressed by want of success, and "the beggarly array of empty creels" by no means interfered with the joviality of the evening. The society, founded in 1837, possesses a very fine and interesting collection of stuffed fresh water fish from home and foreign waters, and it is gratifying to learn that their venerable president, Mr. T. R. Sachs, as keen and devoted an angler as "Old Izaak" himself, is still in good health, and enjoys a day's fishing as much, and as often, as ever.

The Yorkshire rivers are now in excellent condition, and the fine hot weather of the past few days has greatly improved the angling. In the tributaries both trout and grayling have been rising freely to the fly, and on the upper reaches of both Swale and Yore first-class sport has been had. The deeps, too, have been frequented by the bottom fishers, and coarse fish have been well on the feed of late.

In the silly season denunciation of athletes and athleticism periodically makes an appearance in some one journal or other. That it should do so is, on the whole, no matter for surprise, for the discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of athleticism is a never-failing topic, because there always are so very many persons—who are not, and have not been, athletes themselves, and have no practical knowledge of the subject they discuss—ready to rush into print and decry the pursuit, both for itself and for the training that it necessarily involves. The *St. James's Gazette* has recently opened its columns for the discussion of the question, "Is the athlete healthy?" In an exceptionally silly article, even for the silly season, "One who doubts it" gives his reasons—such as they are—for the signature that he adopts. Time and space do not admit of detailing what the reasons he adduces are, but in the course of his article he drags in some ludicrous mis-statements about the race-horse, which serve to show the sort of arguments on which he bases his case, and—*Ex uno disce omnes*.

"After all," he says, "one need not go far to discover the reason. What the athlete is to the ordinary individual, that is the race-horse to the member of the same family seen dragging a load about the streets. The race-horse, as we know, has an exceedingly delicate organisation. He is very susceptible to cold, his food has to be selected with the utmost care, and his habitation must be choice and free from a suspicion of dampness. He is trained for speed. He is beautifully developed and has a lot of muscle; but there is little real stamina in him. Expose him for a single day to the wet and cold in which the coarser-bred animal thrives, and he would probably die. He cannot stand hardship, muscular and speedy as he is. He has no adaptability; it has all been trained out of him."

The writer is so evidently utterly ignorant of the attributes of the race-horse, that it may perhaps be news to him to learn that, save only in the statement that the race-horse—in common with all members of the equine family, hackneys, Shire horses, and ponies—has an exceedingly delicate organisation, his remarks on the race-horse are entirely incorrect. So far from being less hardy than half-bred horses, the blood horse—however unable he may have been when in training to stay more than five furlongs on the flat at racing pace—has far greater *real* power of endurance than a half-bred animal, and consequently stands hardship far better than the latter. A blood horse, moreover, is not only not less adaptable than a half-bred, but is far more so, and in the hands of a careful and patient teacher can be educated to excel at any work to which a horse can be put. Even at heavy draught work, when sometimes, though rarely, put to it, a blood horse will draw half as much again as any half-bred of his weight.

One characteristic letter in the discussion is signed "Germanicus." In this the writer, to show his knowledge of the subject, makes the following sage observation:—"The athlete as a rule is very one-sided, exercising only a part of his body, and he only does so for a comparatively short time, and under entirely altered circumstances." It is difficult at first reading

to grasp the meaning of this preamble, followed as it is by a catalogue of platitudes, but the letter may be best answered and dismissed with the comment that the time has not yet arrived for English athletics to be "made in Germany."

As a means of provoking discussion in a slack time, the publication of the views of the doubter possibly served its purpose. It looks, however, as if the question had only been raised as a sort of literary Aunt Sally. For all the doubter's points have been contravened by a crushing rejoinder in an article by "An Athlete" published at the end of last week. Of course the discussion has been prompted by comments on the recent death of Mr. E. R. Balfour, but as that sad fact was primarily due to blood poisoning, it is hard to see what bearing it can possibly have on the question of the healthiness of athletics.

"A gloomy picture," he says, "is drawn of the brilliant athletes who have died untimely deaths and of others who have suffered long and painful illnesses, but no details are given. To make this an argument against athletics it would be necessary to prove that proportionately more athletes die young than men who have never trained. It is an extraordinary occurrence for a successful athlete to die early in life or to be attacked by a bad illness; and when such a thing does happen, like other remarkable occurrences, it is widely chronicled and commented upon by the Press. If the Oxford Blues—Messrs. Cotton, Stretch, and Balfour—had been ordinary healthy men who had not distinguished themselves by their athletic prowess, the lamentable fact that they had succumbed to common ailments would not have been thought worth recording.

"A much brighter sketch might have been made from the decks of the 'Varsity steamers at the Boat Race, or from the Grand Stand at the Queen's Club on the previous day. Do the crowds of Old Blues who are to be met with on these occasions bear the appearance of having 'lost that adaptability to circumstances possessed, in a greater or less degree, by the untrained man'? They have all undergone the 'general weakening of the system' which, it is stated, results from training, and yet there is, happily, no sign that their constitutions have been thereby 'softened.' It may be said that 'Varsity men possess greater advantages than the average man. Take, then, the crowd at the recent foot race between Bredin and Kilpatrick. Athletes drawn from all classes were present. Many of them had taken part in hard struggles on the same path in the sixties and seventies, and they are now vigorously engaged in almost every branch of commercial life. Bredin, the winner of the race, has been in training—off and on—for the last eight years, and he is still the fastest man in the world at half a mile."

In an athletic reference, the silly season is now at its zenith; everything is just over or just not begun; athletic columns are filled with retrospects and prospects, to the total exclusion of annals of the present. Cricket ended with the North and South match at Hastings; amateur football is not yet in season; lawn tennis died with the great tournament at Brighton; and athletics will scarcely acquire a suspicion of interest until the 'Varsities go up in the third week of October. In fact, sport has killed athletics for the moment. Cricket never recovers from the blow dealt on the 1st of September, and entirely succumbs to the first rumour of cubbing and the sweet-scented misty autumn mornings which one associates with the sport. However, a better time is very near. A cricket team has landed in America; Stoddart's eleven will presently play their first match at Adelaide; the Corinthians will soon bring back details of their vast successes in Africa, and with their return start the amateur football season in England.

It is natural that the last cricket matches should be played as far South as possible, and Hastings has again, according to its reputation, justified itself in holding so late a festival. The weather overhead was beautiful for the North and South match, and the final fixture—yet another meeting of the Gentlemen and Players—opened under conditions as perfect as the activity of the worms would allow. In the former match some very bad fielding on the part of the South gave the North an easy victory, and spoiled what promised to become a finish. But there was, nevertheless, some very interesting cricket. W. G. Grace delighted everyone by making top score for his side in each innings, and, in spite of the tricky wicket, played a free game with all his youthful vigour. The great performance, however, of the game was Lilley's 76, or just half the runs made by his side. There was much discussion last year as to the rival merits of him and Storer when he was selected to play for England. It may be that Stoddart is right in considering Storer the finer wicket-keeper, and he has made an unprecedented run of centuries, but still, as a trustworthy bat on all sorts of wickets, Lilley has again and again proved himself almost beyond comparison.

The final list of the bowling and batting averages makes it appear that after all the batsmen have not had so much the best of things. F. G. J. Ford, Druce, the Cambridge captain, and McLaren, who head the batting averages, are the only three to head 50, and only nine others have passed 40. Also, with the exception of Abel, no single batsman has quite totalled 2,000. Some of the bowling averages, on the other hand, are quite extraordinary. Wilson, the coming captain of Cambridge, is second, but has hardly taken enough wickets to give real test of his merit. Richardson is third, and his figures justify his claim to be considered one of the best bowlers that have yet appeared. In spite of good wickets and a programme of matches which hardly gave him a rest from the beginning of the season to the end, his 260 wickets have only cost just over 14 runs each. What expenditure of mere mechanical force his 1,500 overs represent, might be worth the calculation of some ingenious physicist. It is a significant fact that, of the four Lancashire bowlers, three have taken over 100 wickets each, and Mold, who has been for some time incapacitated, only two less. There is also to be extracted from the figures a fact prophetic of the success of the Australian team, for its three chief professional bowlers, Richardson, Hearne, and Briggs, are the three who head the list in respect of aggregate of wickets.

The Hastings Festival must be pronounced a great, perhaps unexpected, success, especially in respect of attendance. Still, it remains a pity that some match other than a Gentlemen and Players could not have been arranged. The sides were really ludicrously unequal. While the Players were strong enough to play any other team that could have been picked in England, the Gentlemen's side was made up of anyone who could be got. It looked quite absurd to watch such young and little famous cricketers as Grace, junior, and Crawford bowling at the old distinguished Abel and Ward. However, wickets did eventually fall, as will happen in cricket, and this further advantage was gained, that Abel was enabled to complete the grand total of 2,000 runs. Also the crowd was enthusiastic and the sunshine brilliant, so that perhaps it is carping and hypercritical to ask for more at this late period in the season.

Lawn tennis, which died as far as England is concerned with the Brighton tournament of last week, is, its devotees say, increasing in popularity. They may be right, but there is still this peculiarity, perhaps drawback, attached to the game, that wherever the match or tournament takes place, the same set of names are in evidence. The game clings to fashionable resorts, and suits them well, for a tournament, if well conducted, will supply desultory amusement for the best part of a fortnight. In spite of the distance of localities (for now the big tournament is at Homburg, now in the South of France, now at Brighton or Dublin), the same names seem to figure, with much the same success. Some never win, some, it seems, always. The Brighton tournament, more conspicuously successful than for many years, was patronised by a great number of well-known players, in spite of the fact that three or four of the best were prevented by accidents from attending. Amid much good tennis, by far the best match was a single between Greville, immensely improved since he left Oxford, and Pim *redivivus*. For a long time Greville looked the winner, but the style of the older hand eventually just proved superior to Greville's extraordinary accuracy.

Hunting prospects were never rosier in Ireland than at present, and the season of 1897-98 promises to be a record one. The metropolitan packs—the Wards, the Royal Meaths, and the Killing Kildares—are all in great fettle, while the provincial packs never made a better show. It speaks volumes for the healthy state of hunting in Ireland to have new packs springing up, and under such conditions, too, that success is assured. This renaissance is most marked down South, where the Marquis of Waterford has re-established the Curraghmores, which, under his predecessors, held a name second to none, and a wealthy young landowner, Mr. Abel Buckley, has got together a grand new pack, which he has called the Galtee Hounds—a title that comes in very appropriately with Galtee More, the winner of the "triple crown" this year.

Many hunting men whose purses are not "weight-carriers" could not do better than give Ireland a trial during the coming hunting season. The country offers a number of advantages to the hunting man who desires to get the best value for his money. In the first place, it is undoubtedly the country for "leppers," and a good stable can be got together at a much smaller figure than when all the intermediate profits of the dealers are added to the prices of horses picked up across the Channel, and imported into Ireland. Then, if a man's pocket has to be strictly considered, grand sport can be had with some of the provincial Irish packs, at almost a tithe of the cost in "the shires." But the chief claim Ireland has is immunity from those severe winters

which form the great discontent of this country. Hounds are very rarely stopped from frost for more than a few days at a time, and occasionally some packs have not more than half-a-dozen idle days in a season from this cause. Altogether, the inducements which Ireland offers are many, and we will be surprised if a larger hunting contingent does not make her green fields its venue for 1897-98.

Distinctly encouraging to all true lovers of the sport are the prospects of the forthcoming coursing season, for on all hands it is agreed that not for years has the look-out been so bright. Accessions to the ranks of active coursers, and a large increase in the number of greyhounds registered with the keeper of the stud-book, point to a revival of the best days of the sport, whilst the almost total extinction of enclosed meetings, and the revival of several open country gatherings allowed to lapse during the last ten years, go to prove that landowners are not so antagonistic to coursing and coursing men as some would have us believe. It is quite on the cards that the resuscitation of the Everleigh meeting will result in the Wiltshire gatherings recovering their lost prestige, although it is almost too much to expect that the county will ever again be the scene of such meetings as were held there close on half a century ago. Coursing men of the present day have little idea of the importance of the Wiltshire Champion Meeting, which used to extend over five days. An old coursing calendar records the fact that two of the stakes, the Great Western and the Druid Cup, were each of the value of £320; whilst in 1851 the great match, North v. South, each running 32 dogs at £11 each, created quite as much interest as does the decision of the Waterloo Cup in our days. Why should not so interesting a competition be revived?

In his summary of the past season, published in the volume of the "Greyhound Stud-Book" just issued, Mr. W. F. Lamonby anticipates an answer to this query, by asserting that evidence is not wanting that the class of dogs running in the South of England are inferior to those in the North. The Southerners do not appear to sustain that enthusiasm which marks operations beyond the Trent into the far North, nor are their meetings so well supported. Indeed, were it not for a handful of loyal coursers in the southern part of England, several of the oldest and best meetings would disappear from the list of fixtures. A glance through the list of registered owners for the current season proves, however, that this reproach may be removed in the near future, for although death has removed from the ranks of South Country patrons such pillars as Mr. T. P. Hale, Mr. H. G. Miller, and Mr. Isaac Rist, there is not the least doubt as to the vitality of the sport, even in the despised South. As a proof of this, the programmes of most clubs holding meetings this season have been made more attractive than usual. Coursers both North and South have joined hands in the endeavour to raise the fortunes of Everleigh, Mr. John Mugliston, of Lytham, having accepted the hon. secretaryship of the venture; whilst on the committee are such experienced sportsmen as Messrs. G. F. Fawcett, L. Pilkington, M. G. Hale, T. Quilhampton, J. Russell, and A. J. Humphrey. The Collingbourne Downs, the scene of many brilliant gatherings, will be coursed over during the meeting which follows the Eastern Counties gathering next week.

A start has been already made in the Emerald Isle, the opening meeting of the Dublin Club taking place near the Irish capital on the 8th inst. Five stakes were run through, but none were of very great importance, English and Scottish coursers reserving their dogs for the North Union gathering, which has taken place in Masserene Park this week. It was at this gathering twelve months ago that Sir Humphrey de Trafford and the Duke of Leeds did so well, these recent accessions to the ranks of active coursers dividing a stake at the first attempt, both with bitches by Young Fullerton, sire of Gallant, who, a few months later, covered himself with glory by winning the coveted Waterloo Cup. Child, who retains possession of the Avondale establishment at Eltham, has other stock of Young Fullerton coming out this season, a fact making the retention of this good dog at public service very gratifying to breeders. It would have been a great calamity had the dog been secured by a foreign buyer at the sale of the late Colonel North's kennel. How those who were then afraid to bid must now regret their lack of judgment!

In our report of the Dublin Horse Show in the issue of 4th September, an error was made in giving Mr. Widger's Huntsman as the winner of Jumping Competition G. on the third day of the show. Mr. R. M. Campbell's Grey Lord got first honours, Huntsman having been afterwards disqualified. Mr. Widger's wonderful pony has so often won at Ball's Bridge, that it is hardly fair to have him carrying off prizes year after year. Grey Lord was purchased from Mr. Campbell by Mr. Moss, of Loughborough, and resold by him to Mr. Barber, of Culham Court, Henley-on-Thames.

HIPPIAS.

OUR PORTRAIT ILLUSTRATION.

THE COUNTESS OF WARWICK, whose portrait appears on the frontispiece, is a congenial subject for the pen of the biographer. Her beauty, striking and brilliant as it is, is equalled by her benevolent kind-heartedness, and her practical efforts to brighten the lot of the lowly are the natural outcome of good feeling. Elder daughter and principal heiress of her father, the late Colonel the Hon. Charles Maynard (son of the last Viscount Maynard), she married in 1881 the Earl of Warwick, then Lord Brooke, and has a son and a daughter.

Lady Warwick takes a broad view of the duties of a *châtelaine*, both at Warwick Castle, and at her own place, Easton Lodge, in Essex. She is on the Board of Guardians at the former place, and during the time that the Earl was Mayor of Warwick was most hospitable in entertaining. Her interest in all matters affecting the welfare of women is sincere, and was proved to be so by the trouble she took in arranging her special portion of the Women's Section of the Victorian Era Exhibition. In Essex Lady Warwick has established a School for Sewing, and has very greatly improved the condition of her tenantry. In fact, her ladyship is a model landlord. Finding the need of a London dépôt in connection with her Dunmow School, the Countess opened a shop in Bond Street, one of the daintiest and most attractive in that fashionable thoroughfare. Above the windows her title appears in gilt letters.

Of Society Lady Warwick is so brilliant an ornament that people are sometimes incredulous about her good works and her philanthropy, genuine as they are. She dresses in the best taste, dances beautifully, skates gracefully, and is never more charming than as a hostess, her fascinating manner agreeing well with her beautiful face and kindly eyes in expressing her hospitality. The Countess drives a four-in-hand with grace and skill, hunts regularly with the Warwickshire and Essex packs, rides her bicycle about the country lanes, and gave last year a wonderful fancy ball at Warwick Castle.

Her portrait was painted this season by Carolus Duran, to whom she sat in Paris. The Countess declares that she owes to this circumstance immunity from the awful fire at a fashionable bazaar in which perished so many of the fairest and noblest members of Parisian Society. The artist kept his subject standing for an hour and a-half that morning, and this so wearied her that she gave up going to the bazaar, most providentially as it turned out.

ON THE GREEN.

IT would have been a terrible thing for the "professional children of wrath," as Colonel Lockhart styled them in his "Voice from the Rhine," if they had allowed Mr. Hilton to repeat in Ireland his victory at Hoylake. After so easily winning the Amateur Championship of Ireland, he might well have started in good pluck for the open contest. But the profession was equal to the occasion. Mr. Hilton, besides, did not do himself full justice in taking 80 strokes for his first round. He followed it up, however, with a very fine 76 at the second attempt. But the professionals, meanwhile, had not been letting the grass grow under their feet. Sayers in his first round equalled the record of the green, which had only a few days before been set at 74 by Mr. Hilton himself; and this was considerably the lowest score returned in that round. Willie Fernie had 78, and so had Jack White and George Pulford. So Sayers had a lead of them all of four strokes when he started for the afternoon round—a fine position for a man who has lately been out of health and in little practice. But in the afternoon he fell away, to the extent of a third, from his morning's form, and finished in 80, making his total 154. Fernie topped his 78 of the morning with a very fine 75, and took first place with 153. And Jack White, with 78 and 77, was third, at 155. Mr. Hilton was a stroke more, and equal with him, at 156, was Pulford, with two very steady scores of 78. Herd was 159, Harry Vardon 160, and between 160 and 170 came the ruck of the field.

There were some very good players in for the Victoria Jubilee Vase Tournament at St. Andrews. The most severely handicapped were Mr. Edward Blackwell, the long driver, and Mr. Leslie Balfour Melville, the ex-amateur champion, both of whom were set to owe three. Mr. Ernley Blackwell started owing two, Mr. Charles Hutchings owed one, and altogether there were ten players at or below the scratch mark—a large proportion out of the numbers entered. Many good matches were played in the days before the tournament, one of the best and best contested being the foursome in which the brothers Blackwell met Mr. Balfour Melville and Mr. Hutchings, and vanquished them by a single hole.

The finest match that the first round of the tournament produced was in which Mr. Ernley Blackwell met and gave a stroke to Mr. Low. In view of the latter's much improved game, since he was captain of the Cambridge University team, Mr. Blackwell did well, giving even the shortest odds, to halve the match. The second round was noticeable chiefly for the defeat of Mr. Balfour Melville, who fell at the hands of Mr. H. H. Longman. The fortune of war brought Mr. Ernley Blackwell and Mr. Low together again in the fourth round of the tournament, and this time Mr. Low, with his stroke allowed, was just too good, and put Mr. Blackwell out, but the other Mr. Blackwell—the longest driver of them all—defeated Mr. Hutchings very heavily, and so maintained the family honour until the fifth round. But in the fifth round he had to meet Mr. G. Leslie Smith, who was in receipt of four strokes, in addition to Mr. Blackwell's penalty odds. The latter had no luck from the very start, and Mr. Leslie Smith actually won the first five holes

After this the match was better contested, but the giver of odds never succeeded in shaking off this incubus incurred at starting, and Mr. Smith had an easy win, and went into the final tie. With him in the final was Mr. J. L. Low, who beat Mr. Longman fairly easily in the semi-final, in spite of longish odds. In the final tie it looked for a while as if all were to go in favour of Mr. Leslie Smith, to whom Mr. Low had to allow five strokes, and who won the first two holes off the reel. Nevertheless the giver of odds, after this disastrous beginning, stuck to his work well, and, squaring the match some way from home, gained a hole of vantage with two to play, and these two being halved, Mr. Low won the cup after as close a contest as either players or spectators could desire.

WIRE IN THE HUNTING FIELD.

IT is stated by an eminent authority that the ancient Egyptians had mummies brought into their halls, whilst they were in the midst of their bacchanalian revels, in order that they should never lose sight of the fact that they were but mere flesh and blood. In like manner fox-hunters of to-day, the modern devotees of Diana, have a grinning skeleton present at their sport, which is surely far more potent in showing them that they are but mortal than the embalmed bodies used by the old dwellers on the banks of the Nile. I need hardly say that I allude to barbed wire, for a more fiendish invention could scarcely have been designed by the wit of man to spoil the sport and injure the followers of hounds. A determined horseman will ride at the stiffest of timber, at the widest of ditches, or the thickest of bullfinches, but the very sight of wire unnerves him, for if he attempts to jump it he carries not only his own life but also that of his horse in his hand.

The rising generation of hunting men are apt to think that the wire question has only come into notice during the last few years. This is true enough as regards barbed wire, but the plain variety began to attract marked attention as far back as the year 1860, and it increased so much during the next year or two, that in 1863 a circular of remonstrance was addressed to the farmers by a great number of the chief landowners in the Shires, including the Duke of Rutland, Earls Spencer and Eglington, Lord Gardener, Major Whyte Melville, Messrs. Villiers, Knightley, and many others.

The proclamation, which pointed out that "if this custom become general it will entirely put an end to fox-hunting," was no doubt hurried on by several prominent men having had bad falls over wire in 1862, amongst whom were Major Whyte Melville and James Mason. Wire must have gained ground enormously since then all over England, so the sport, indeed, must be possessed of the greatest vitality to have withstood the attack.

It is all very well to say that a man can fence with what material he likes, but it amounts to a moral, if not a legal, crime for anyone to put barbed wire through the middle of a thick hedge, where it cannot be seen, when they perfectly well know that a body of horsemen are likely to ride at it any day. If a man must put up wire, let him place it at some little distance from the fence, and place notice boards or flags at intervals along the hedge, warning people what to expect.

The effect of a fall over barbed wire is far more severe than would appear at first sight, for a cut therefrom will very often set up blood poisoning, and not a few horses have been killed in this way. A boy also died not long ago from that cause, it being subsequently proved at the inquest that the wound where the poison entered was originated by a gash from barbed wire. It would consequently be advisable to dress all wounds caused by the barbs with a strong antiseptic lotion. The barbed kind is, in another instance, very much more fatal than ordinary wire, for, after a horse has fallen it as likely as not breaks and coils itself round the unfortunate animal's legs like some venomous snake, and the more he tries to free himself the more he becomes entangled, until at last a bullet becomes the only cure for his misery. More than one good hunter was killed in this manner last season.

It was stated a short time back that 600 cavalry charged the British square at the battle of Ilorin, which was fought shortly after the capture of Bida. If the engineers on that occasion had had some coils of barbed wire and a few posts with them, and had put that round the square in two strands, about fifty yards away on each side, the enemy would have been thrown into confusion much more easily, and, therefore, dispersed with greater loss by our soldiers. The experiment would surely be worth trying, especially in fighting with savages, where military experts deem the square formation best. The wire and the posts could be transported without much difficulty, and would be much more effective in stopping a determined enemy, especially if cavalry, than any other form of defence that could be thrown up in the short space of time that this would require.

There is nothing so provoking when a man is taking a line of his own, and is well up with the hounds, as to find himself confronted with wire. More particularly so if he has not the appliances for cutting it; the only alternative is to go back. To prevent this it is always as well to have a pair of wire-nippers, which must be kept on the saddle in a small leather case, not in the pocket, for, in the event of a fall, if carried on the person they might cause a very nasty accident. There are many descriptions of nippers, but those that cut on something of the same principle as scissors are of very little use, whilst those that work in the same way as pincers, only with sharp edges, are the most effective; even then the fulcrum from whence the leverage is obtained must be as close to the cutting edges as possible, in order to get sufficient power to cut through the two strands of which barbed wire is composed. A Birmingham firm have lately brought out an especial pattern of wire-nippers for the use of huntsmen (what a sign of the times!); they cut to the front, which is an advantage, and by a system of springs a double leverage is obtained, but not having tried them I am unable to express an opinion on their merits. Wire-nippers should only be employed where absolutely necessary, for by their too frequent use bad feeling is created with the farmers.

Wire, like the poor, will always be with us, unless there is Parliamentary interference, which is not likely, so all that can be done is to endeavour to mitigate the misfortune as much as possible. To this end, those who have interest should ask the farmers who use wire to remove it when the hunting season begins and to replace it when the hunting season is over. If this cannot be done, a liberal donation to the wire fund of the hunt will answer much the same purpose. Those who possess land within the borders of the hunt can render great assistance by inserting clauses in their tenants' leases to the effect that no wire is to be used for fencing from October to April inclusive. This last plan has been tried with great success in many places. HELIOS.

BEAVERS IN SUSSEX.

WRITING of the "natural commodities" of the county of Cardigan, the old chronicler Fuller has an entry under the head "Beavers." "Plenty of them did formerly breed in the river Tyvy," he writes, "but what plenty so ever there was in the days of Giraldus, the breed of them is now quite destroyed, and neither the fore foot of a beaver (which is like a dog's), nor the hind foot (which is like a goose's), to be seen therein." Fuller died in 1661, and his "Worthies" was published in 1662.

The Marquis of Bute kept for some years some wild beavers in Scotland; but so far as England is concerned this "natural commodity" had been absent until, seven years ago, Sir Edmund Loder established his beaver colony on the banks of a stream in Leonardslee Park. There they have thriven, and conducted their engineering works on a scale not exceeded by those surviving in North America.

The SITE OF THE BEAVER COLONY is shown in our first illustration. It is exactly the kind of place which they would choose if left to themselves when free to wander in the woods



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw.

SITE OF THE BEAVER COLONY.

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and streams of Canada. It is at the bottom of the valley, where the trees formerly grew thickly down to the edge of the water.



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw.

THE DAM AND ITS BUILDER.

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Outside the enclosure, which is of corrugated iron, except where the stream enters at the top and leaves at the bottom of the park, the trees are still close together. Inside the enclosure the beavers have cut down all but the largest timber and one or two trees protected by iron, in order to build their dam. The original course of the stream, before the beavers began their engineering operations, may be traced in our engraving. It entered the enclosure at the top, exactly in the centre of the picture, where the break in the fence is, behind the tree which is lying in the water. It then flowed on, as an ordinary small brook, to the right of the oak tree which supports the centre of the dam, down the channel where shallow water still trickles, and left the enclosure by the iron grating on the right. The view gives an excellent general idea of the change in the landscape which the beavers have made. In place of a brook running the whole length of the enclosure, two-thirds of the area is covered by a deep and wide pool six times as broad as the original brook, and six times as deep at the lower end. The dam, which supports all this weight of water, cuts the enclosure in half, and is even more conspicuous than it appears in the photograph, for all the timber of which it is built has been peeled, and the bark eaten by the beavers. The white logs and sticks have therefore a fresh and artificial appearance. As every branch and morsel of stick is cut up into lengths, and worked into the dam, the beaver park has also a very tidy appearance. The bark is eaten, the sticks used for building, and the chips taken into their house for bedding. Their house, called by the Indians the beaver lodge, is on the left bank of the pool, and is clearly seen just to the right of the oak trunk which rises from the dam.

The dam is the means by which the beavers have in a few years made this astonishing alteration in the economy of the brook. Here is a closer view, showing both THE DAM AND ITS BUILDER, taken by Sir Edmund Loder himself. On the left, sitting on the top of the dam, is one of the beavers inspecting the



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw.

BEAVERS AS ENGINEERS.

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structure, to see if there are any weak places on the water line. If it strikes him that anything needs repairing he will dive, fetch up a mouthful of mud, and cram it in with his hands between the sticks. The size of the work is as remarkable and more apparent than the knowledge of engineering principles which underlies its structure. When this picture was taken, some sixteen months ago, its perpendicular height was about 5ft., and its thickness at the base probably not less than 16ft. All this is compacted of battens of large wood, with small sticks, twigs, and mud stuffed into the interstices, until it is as solid as a wall, and impervious to water. Comparing this view of the top of the dam with the next, which shows it from the lower side, we can see some of the methods of BEAVERS AS ENGINEERS.

Their principles are exactly those used by modern engineers when water, that most difficult body to control, has to be dealt with. But while the beavers have known how to do this from time immemorial, there was not in England, in the days of Charles I., a single engineer who knew these principles as the beavers know them.

The beavers' aim in making the dam is to keep a pool of water at a constant height, deep enough to allow them to swim beneath the ice when it freezes, and to cover the under-water entrance to their lodge. Deep water is, in fact, more necessary to them than to the moat of a fortress. But to dam a running stream is a most difficult matter. Experience shows that not only must the dam be strong enough to resist the increasing pressure of the water behind it, but its top must be perfectly level, so that when the water fills the pool above, especially in sudden floods, it flows over it evenly, otherwise a gap is cut at once and the dam is destroyed. The "section" of the dam is exactly that which human engineers have adopted for dams by mathematical calculation, and the top is kept level by daily inspection by the beavers themselves. So careful are they to mend any breaks in the level that the Canadian trappers make small gaps in the dam and then



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw.

THE FOOT OF THE DAM.

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Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw.

THE NEW POOL

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set traps in them, knowing that the unhappy beavers will work at repairing the breaks, and be caught. In one case three traps were set in three breaches thus made. In two beavers were caught and killed. The third trap caught a duck. It was found that the other beavers had used the trap and the duck, with some other handy materials, to mend the dam!

The view was taken at a season when the water in the stream was low, so that the trickle of the overflow is not seen as it escapes over the dam among the little twigs and sticks on the face of the structure. But in floods, when the dams of the artificial pools higher up the stream were frequently burst, the beavers' dam kept sound and strong.

THE FOOT OF THE DAM shows the cleverness with which the beavers chose its site. They began to build it above a moderate-sized oak tree, which stood close on what was, at the time they began to build, the bank of the stream. The beavers never attempted to remove this tree, though they cut down, or tried to do so, every other unprotected tree, except a very big fir, in the enclosure. They did not use this trunk to help when they began building; but its use was apparent later. Now the base of the structure reaches to the oak, which acts as an immovable buttress in the centre. It will be noticed that in the last two pictures the slope of the dam is covered with big sticks, and is not neat and tidy as in Sir Edmund Loder's picture taken earlier. That is because the beavers have not had enough small sticks and twigs to work in and give finish to their building. The dam, too, has been raised nearly a foot in the interval between the taking of the photographs.

THE NEW POOL now extends far along what was the course of the stream. This originally ran between



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw.

THE BEAVERS' LODGE

Copyright.

two of the three trees in the central foreground. Now all three of these are surrounded by water. The beavers have actually tried to cut down the oak to the left, and the fir to the right. The mark on the former is visible just above the water—a large cut as if made with an axe. The rising of the water made it impossible to finish the job. The fir was begun and abandoned in the same way. The tree in the water was undermined by the beavers. It is one of the new parts of beaver history learnt at Leonardslee that they fell trees in this way as well as with their teeth. They ate every bit of the bark, and cut off all the branches but three, and took them to heighten the dam. Lastly we have THE BEAVERS' LODGE. This is its appearance now. Some years ago their home was only a burrow in the bank. In time the beavers began to lay a few sticks and some mud on the grass above their subterranean chamber. Then they added more sticks, and more mud, till the lodge grew to its present size. The old Canadians, struck by the wonderful cleverness of the beaver dam, concluded

that the lodges were equally interesting. They declared that the beavers made windows in them, and it is known that they were often surrounded by water. Sir Edmund Loder has solved the difficulty about the growth of their houses. The evolution of the lodge takes place in this way. The beavers first dig an underground chamber, just as a water-rat does. They then constantly carry in chips from their carpentering work, to make a bed in the chamber. But they never take the old chips out when they bring fresh ones in. Consequently the floor rises till they have to scratch away the ceiling. Soon the light shows through the top, and the roof is added. The process goes on till the lodge grows like a beehive. Then as the water in the lake rises, it in time surrounds the house. There are some young beavers in the colony as well as old ones, the whole number being usually about five. If they escape they are caught in a box trap baited with dog-biscuit, of which they every day have a piece for a treat.

C. J. CORNISH.

SOME LADIES' DOGS.

THE three Chows whose portraits are given in COUNTRY LIFE this week are the property of Lady Granville Gordon, whose special regard for the breed may be taken as proven from the fact that she has never owned any other dog but a Chow, nor, I believe, would she care much to possess one of any other variety. This preference is explained by the fact that, until she married, Lady Granville had no dog pets, and that her first after marriage was a Chow. The late Marquis of Huntly had imported some of the very best specimens procurable from China, and at that time owned perhaps the largest kennel of Chows in England; and, indeed, the Huntly strain, as it is called, is, I believe, still kept up by the present Marquis at Orton Longueville.

It was one of these beautiful dogs that Lady Granville received as a present from the late Dowager Marchioness. Since then she has been the fortunate owner of several of the Huntly breed. Pekoe II., a very good black, is one of the first that came into her possession, and Peridot II. was a later gift from the Dowager, who bred him, and who shortly before her decease gave him into her daughter-in-law's kindly keeping. At the time when he left

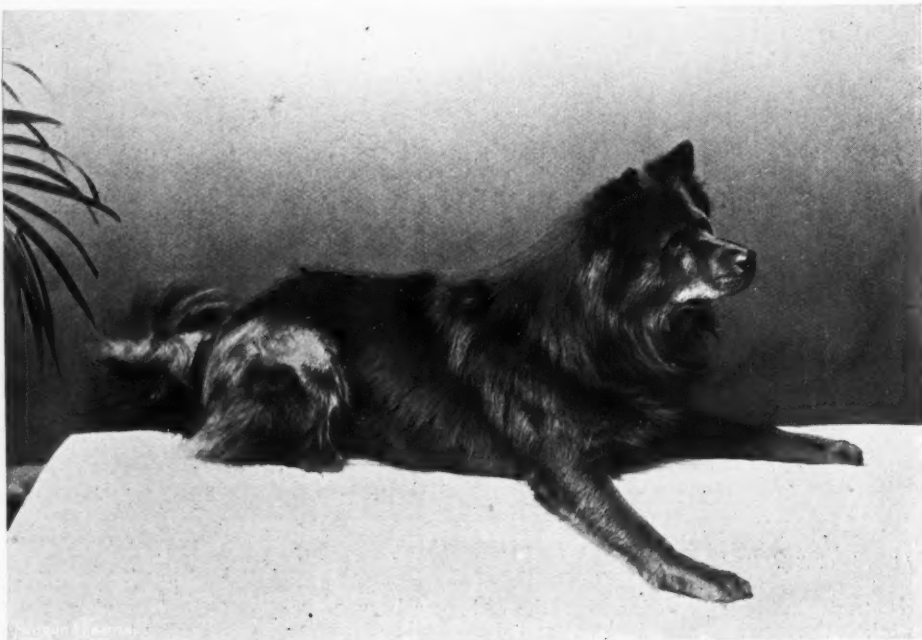


Photo. Harrod's Stores,

PERIDOT II.

Brompton Road.

Orton Longueville for Mayfair, Peridot was two years old; he is now over ten, and though in muzzle i.e. shows signs of age, he still gives ample evidence of his breeding, quality, and constitution. This dog divides his affections between Lady Granville and her daughter Armyne, and shared her playroom and schoolroom, if not her studies, for seven years, until the day came when the schoolroom was no longer necessary. Like his other Chow comrades, he lives in the house, and up to the date of Miss Fishbourne's departure a few months ago to a country home, where, under the kind help of Lady Granville, she hopes to open a "training home for dogs," they were all drilled by her into wonderful habits. Every morning before being admitted to the schoolroom the Chows were brushed and groomed on a particular table, and thither they used to come punctually and wait decorously, each Chow taking its turn in proper order, and fully aware that precedence went by seniority, the old dogs first and puppies last. Miss Fishbourne, being very fond of dogs, and one of those naturally gifted with the faculty of training them, took great pride in these Chows and their perfect manners. Nothing surprises the visitors who happen to lunch at the house for the first time more than the sudden appearance, as soon as lunch is over, of the Chows from all parts of the room, where they have lain quietly and unobserved during the progress of the meal, after which they would see these dogs form themselves into a procession and follow one another in solemn file into the drawing-room, where they consider it their duty to treat the stranger with courtesy. After paying their respects, the magic word "lunch" is given, and they each march quietly out of the room again, and once outside bound off upstairs to their own apartment, where the meal awaits them.

They are certainly a very delightful family of dogs. PERIDOT II. is red in colour, and of good shape, with the requisite foxy head, bright small eyes, and delicately small, well-carried ears. His tail is well feathered and carried gracefully, and when in full plumage he stands a very



Photo. Edwards, BLUE BLOOD AND MI HI. Hyde Park Corner.

handsome, shapely dog, and is accordingly much admired. Peridot II. commands a big record of wins, and his mistress is never tired of telling how he beat, on one occasion, the best red Chow ever benched in England, Chow VIII., from whom he took the coveted challenge bracelet and the Premiership at Ranelagh, in 1895.

BLUE BLOOD is one of the rare mouse lavender-coloured Chows, of which variety I am very glad to see the number is steadily increasing. For many years Blue Blood enjoyed the distinction of being the only blue, then Mr. Temple produced one, Lady Gordon bred another, and so on, until I think to-day there must be at least ten of this rare and very fascinating colour. The blue Chow is hard to rear, and rarely gets over the teething. Blue Blood himself had a very bad time when seven months old, but since then has been the healthiest of dogs. He is like a delightful woolly bear, and his coat is enormous. Blue Blood is a son of Peridot II., a red, by Pekin, a black, also of Lady Gordon's breeding. There is now another youngster of her own breeding, which she intends to show at the Crystal Palace, and its coat is even a lighter blue, so that great hopes are entertained of her. Lady Granville Gordon is now giving some attention to the smooth Chows, and has recently bought the best one seen here in Mr. Hi. He belonged to Mr. Temple, and at the Botanic Lady Granville procured a capital match for him in Madame Patti. With these additions, and the various young families coming forward, it is not surprising that Lady Granville's kennel has grown beyond the capabilities of a town house, so all the Chow mothers and their families are boarded at Miss Fishbourne's until their education is complete and they understand the ways and duties of life in Berkeley Square.

Mrs. Jagger's RUBICON is one of the best St. Bernard brood bitches living, as well as a winner of prizes wherever her mistress



Photo. by T. Fall,

RUBICON.

Baker Street.

has exhibited her, but the truth is that, as Mrs. Jagger rarely shows an animal worth less than £1,000, a dog of only average quality rarely tempts her to the length of introducing it to the show-ring. This year, however, having parted with her crack, Champion Frandley Stephanie, and her wonderful young dog Clairvaux going wrong, she found herself compelled to show her home favourites or none at all. She very properly chose the better part of bringing the Cinderellas of her kennel forward, and, like the heroine of the fairy story, Rubicon has turned out a veritable princess, for she has taken first prizes in strong classes at every show at which Mrs. Jagger has been persuaded to show her.

Since the Ladies' Botanic Show, Rubicon has added to her mistress's good fortune by becoming the mother of a very promising lot of puppies, all of which are perfect in colour and markings, with big heads and big limbs, and having for their age the strength of young lions. I hope these will prove as satisfactory for Mrs. Jagger as Hornsea Jessamine, one of Rubicon's previous litter, who distinguished herself by four firsts and five specials so recently at Liverpool, and at Darlington took three firsts and five specials, in addition to second prizes. A few healthy St. Bernards of equal quality will restore the breed to popularity.

The young family of Bloodhounds of which we reproduce the picture belongs to Mrs. Vincent Taylor, who, being only recently married, is better known in the dog world as Miss Woodcock. For many years this lady has kept a kennel of this fine old British hound, and her dog, Lord Lovel (in the centre of the group), is very popular with many connoisseurs, and has won many prizes for his owner. Among the group is also Michael Sunlocks, one of those which she exhibited at the Botanic, and of whom great things are expected when he matures.

A. S. R.



Photo. by T. Fall,

MRS. VINCENT TAYLOR'S BLOODHOUNDS.

Baker Street.

CYCLING NOTES.

NO doubt there is a very considerable minority of cyclists who suffer a deal of inconvenience from their saddles, though their sufferings are not very intelligible to the greater majority who are blessed in knowing no such suffering. For those in the latter state of comparative satisfaction it is certain that the simplest form of saddle is the best, such a saddle as is furnished with sufficient springs to guard against a severe jar, but, for the rest, is merely a simple arrangement in iron and leather. One of Brookes' saddles is the best for these folk, the size being necessarily relative to the size of the sitter. Other things being equal, pneumatic saddles make rather for discomfort—the quality of dis-

comfort that one who is accustomed to a hard mattress endures in the soft depths of a feather bed. They are too soft, too clinging, too hot; there is a sensation of a tonic kind in going from one of them to a plain leather saddle. But all things are not always equal. To some riders the pressure and the crudities of the plain saddle are unendurable, and to them some forms of the pneumatic saddle come as a real boon, actually making cycling possible to some who had been on the point of giving it up as an impossibility.

The wearer knows where the shoe, and the saddle, pinches, and when a certain point of the ordinary saddle hurts by its pressure, the rider

will do well to seek a kind of saddle which obviously exerts no pressure on that particular point, even if its mode of construction sacrifices a certain measure of support. The V-gor saddle, comparatively lately patented, is a modification of this idea of supporting the important points, and exerting no pressure on those points on which the sitter does not depend for support.

There is also another newly patented saddle, so newly that it is not yet on the market, which aims at combining the merits of the all leather and all pneumatic saddles. The hinder part is of leather, supported in the ordinary way on springs, but the front is supported by a pneumatic cushion, so that any of those violent jars that are the portion of the beginner on the common saddle are broken and lessened in force by the air cushion. It is not at all unlikely that when this saddle has been fairly tried it will become the most popular of all the contrivances designed for the relief of this special form of suffering, but meantime it is merely at that infantile age through which all promoters of new inventions know how hard it is to bring a child of this nature and conduct it to maturity.

Cyclists, no doubt, are apt to study lightness in their machines rather more

than is wise, and without sufficiently regarding the riding weight that they are going to put on them; but, for all that, it is a help to a light-weight rider to be able to fit himself or herself with a cycle whose weight does not handicap, and in the interest of these it may be useful to point out the merits of some of the "semi-race" and "road-racing" brands of various makers. Their merit of lightness is so obvious that it does not need to go into its details. The machines are constructed with a view to strength in the important structural parts, in order to bear the strain of speed on the track, and, at the same time, with strict regard to the reduction of weight in all parts where strength is not absolutely essential. The only detail in which they are sometimes ill-adapted for ordinary road riding is in the tyres. But this is a matter of very ready alteration. It only needs to have the racing tyres taken off and the ordinary road-riding tyres put on to make the machine in every respect an efficient roadster and at a lighter weight than most riders think of getting one. Unfortunately, the "semi-race" is less easily available for women than for men, for fewer are built, so that the selection is not from so great a number.

ENGLAND'S GRANARY.



Photo. by J. W. Dick.

OUR BEST PUBLIC GRANARIES.

Copyright.

SOME very competent writers, frightened by the disproportion between the wheat grown in England and the quantity needed for our daily bread, have recently urged the establishment of public granaries, for use in time of war. The only wonder is that the figures which impress them have not made more impression on the public. But while hundreds of thousands of acres of good wheatland lie uncultivated in England, the proposal to buy and hoard foreign corn is rather too previous. OUR BEST PUBLIC GRANARIES are the wheatfields of old England which have fallen into partial ruin and premature decay. These are the national corn stores, which need reconstruction and new equipment. From the brick and mortar granary we can at most take out what we put in—so many millions of bushels at so many dollars, bought from foreigners over the water. With good English soil for our granary, the corn bought with that money would "bring forth, some twenty-fold, some sixty-fold, some a hundred-fold."

The wheatfields of England have two special claims to consideration, based on their merits, and apart from sentiment, though we have lately begun to apprehend that national sentiment in great concerns may be as valuable as public spirit in small ones. But the fact remains that the wheatfields of England are the oldest national industries in this country, and the most productive in the world.

A WHEATFIELD A THOUSAND YEARS OLD is quite a common sight in this country. Of course it has not grown a crop of corn every year in the ten centuries, but during that long sequence of ages, in the fixed and abiding order of this ancient country, that particular area of land has been cultivated, with the production of wheat as its main object, and it has remained as part of the English granary from the days of Edward the Confessor until those of Victoria. Many of the wheatfields are far more ancient than this, but the record of Doomsday Book is a practical voucher for a period of one thousand years. The custom of the Saxon cultivators, and the evidence of local names, are proof of a still greater antiquity of cultivation on some of the best cornland; and beyond the days of the Saxons lie the last two centuries of Roman occupation, when England was the

great wheat-growing country of the West, and supplied the population of Rome with daily bread.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of our ancestral cornlands is the small degree in which their appearance can have changed in the course of ten or twelve centuries. Their area is much greater than in the old times, when villages were separated by wide woodlands, and only grouped and contiguous in naturally open country. The early Saxon times were not days in which men cared to lay field to field. There was plenty of ground available, and of this the villagers cultivated and sowed with corn as much as they needed for their year's supply.

The flat rich plain shown in our second illustration is typical of the sites of these ancient cornlands. It lies adjacent to a row of old Saxon settlements under the Downs, which are seen beyond the plain. The men in each village went out with their horses, and ploughed, sowed, and harvested a long narrow strip, starting from the village or town. This strip they called the "Town Furlong," and to this day the thousand year old wheatfield is called "Tun Furlun." As they had no turnips or beetroot, and no great quantity of hay, they could keep few cattle, and had little manure. Consequently they had to leave their Town Furlong fallow for three years to recover itself after the corn was reaped. They ploughed and sowed the strip next to it in the following year, and after that cultivated a third, returning in the fourth year to the original wheatfield. "One-third wheat and two-thirds weeds" was the Anglo-Saxon notion of high farming.

The next change in the appearance of this smiling plain was caused by private ownership. The common fields were broken up into an infinite number of patches, marked by low banks or boundary stones, and during several centuries each peasant reaped his little patches for his private store. In the natural process by which these passed into fewer hands, the subdivision into minute portions still held good; and it was not until the great enclosures of the end of the last century, a process which was continued, by obtaining special Acts of Parliament, well into the last reign, that their holdings were joined together, and the patchwork system banished from our most ancient and most fertile lands. These then became the broad acres, so justly



Photo. by J. W. Dick.

A WHEATFIELD A THOUSAND YEARS OLD.

Copyright.

famous, which have held their own in the competition to supply our daily bread after more recent additions to our wheatlands have relapsed to weeds and thistles.

Their productiveness is astonishing. From thirty to forty bushels of wheat an acre is the common yield of our English cornfields. Sixteen bushels an acre represents the average of the virgin soil of the Western States of America. This natural fertility is aided by special appliances which have grown up round the ancient fields from century to century.

Every acre has its corresponding share of fixed capital for its

profitable working. Special cottages for the homes of the cultivators; barns and buildings for crop and implements; stables for the horses, yards for the cattle, and folds for the sheep, which play their part in the chemistry of modern farming; good roads so made as to be accessible, if possible, from every field, and a network of railways to bring the wheat to the centres of great cities divided only by a few hours' journey from the fields and from each other, are all part of the great and costly equipment of the English cornfields. The economic causes and economic legislation which have prevailed to paralyse in

great part these natural advantages and accumulated resources of centuries, must be powerful indeed. The former are world-wide, and beyond remedy; and the attention of the country is turning slowly, but surely, to the question of how far taxes and imposts once levied on the land when the growth of wheat was prosperous and without competitors, should now be relaxed in the interests of the whole country.

Formulas have had a good innings in all questions connected with land. For the concrete example of the meaning of a phrase very dear to economists—"the margin of cultivation"—it would not be otherwise than to the point to suggest a visit to the Ridgeway which runs along the summit of the Berkshire Downs. Beyond it lay, ten years ago, tens of thousands of acres of wheat-fields. Nearly the whole of this land WHERE THE MOWER BOUND THE SHEAVES is now weeds, grass, and thistles.

AGRICOLA.



Photo. by J. W. Dick.

WHERE THE MOWER BOUND THE SHEAVES.

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COUNTRY HOMES: GLAMIS CASTLE.

ALREADY these pages have described and illustrated one historic mansion associated with the dark deed of Macbeth, thane of Glamis, and of Cawdor, namely, Cawdor Castle, the beautiful seat of Earl Cawdor in Nairn. Now the great and imposing place of Glamis Castle, in Forfarshire, in the beautiful vale of Strathmore, between the Grampians and the Sidlaws, is the theme—a house which has descended from father to son in the family of Lyon since Sir John Lyon married the daughter of King Robert II. No man ever visits Glamis and leaves the strong portal without feeling something of the gloomy glamour of the old abode. Brightness has settled, indeed, upon its hoary age, its loneliness has departed, and all about it spread beautiful gardens and romantic

hills; but the weird traditions of an earlier day still seem to shadow it as the night creeps up the sky.

If not of dim Macbeth and the murdered Duncan—though they show a traditional scene of the bloody deed near the crypt—yet we think of Malcolm II., treacherously wounded to death by Kenneth, and brought here to die, and of beautiful Lady Glamis, falsely accused by a rejected lover of practising witchcraft against the life of James V., dragged by un pitying wretches, whom suborned witnesses deceived, to her horrible death at the stake in 1537 on Edinburgh Castle Hill. Then there is the grim hereditary mystery of the house of Strathmore, the secret terror that each earl transmits to his eldest son, calling in but one trusted witness lest the chain of the

dark story should be severed. Thus does each Earl of Strathmore carry in his breast, unuttered until the appointed hour, the fateful legend of his race. None have ever penetrated the mystery, though some associate it with the unholy card-playing of a long-dead Lord Glamis, who, undeterred by the breaking Sabbath, swore with a loud oath that the game should end, though Doomsday saw its close; and so they say the play goes on by yearly recurrence at an appointed hour. This story reminds one of some other North Country legends. It is like the uncanny Sunday fishing that gave birth to the Worm of Lambton; like the impious hay-getting, in defiance of the sanctity of St. Barnabas, of the Durham farmer who was swallowed up in a sulphurous pool, exclaiming blasphemously—

"Barnaby yea, Barnaby nay!
I'll hae my hay
Whether God will or nay."

But it is time to turn from the ghostly legends of Glamis to Glamis itself. The great and lofty central block, or keep, of the castle, with its angle turrets and many pinnacles, is the most imposing of its class in Scotland. The actual core of the structure is of venerable antiquity, for it is known to have been standing in 1016, and its immensely thick walls and narrow windows gave it a character of exceeding strength. From time to time changes have been introduced, adding a little to the picturesqueness, and much to the comfort of the place. The narrow windows, hidden passages, and all the military features are there, and no modern destructive spirit has been allowed to pervade the house; but Patrick, Lord Glamis, who beautified the castle early in the seventeenth century, added a fine feature in the great circular tower, with its winding staircase, which was partly carved out of the huge bulk of the central pile in 1605. The staircase is built round a newel, and has 143 monolith steps, each nearly 7ft. long. It is said that Inigo Jones designed the tower, and the bust of Lord Glamis, above the narrow, gun-protected portal, is somewhat in his style. The left wing of the house is also of high antiquity, as its narrow windows and thick walls testify, but, unfortunately, the right wing was burned down, and rebuilt in 1800, thus losing a good deal of its interest. But the castle suffered much more in its surroundings than in itself in the same unfortunate year. Sir Walter Scott, who deplored the destruction of courtyard, ornamental enclosure, fosse, avenue, barbican, and external works of battled wall and flanking tower, looked back lovingly to the time when "the huge old Tower of Glamis once showed its head above seven circles of defensive boundaries, through which the friendly guest was admitted, and at each of which a suspicious person was unquestionably put to his answer."

Entering the castle by the iron-barred gate, and avoiding



Valentine and Sons. FROM THE AVENUE.

Dundee.

the descent to the dungeon below, a short flight on the left brings us to the hall, or, as it is curiously described, the "crypt," a chamber with narrow windows, a great barrel-vaulting of roughly-hewn stone, and figures clad in armour standing along the wall. The little room ascribed to the deed of Macbeth is entered from this characteristic apartment, as is the dining-room, which belongs to the year 1800. Here is an armorial mantel-piece, with good panelling, a recess with fluted Ionic pillars, and a ceiling with pendants, as well as many family portraits upon the walls, and the "Lion of Glamis," being

a pint measure for wine in the shape of a silver-gilt lion. The drawing-room, which is upon a higher floor of the castle, is a noble apartment, about 60ft. long, with an ancient barrel-vaulting adorned with fine plaster work in 1621. At one end of the room, over a carved bookcase, hangs a splendid portrait of Patrick, first Earl of Strathmore and third of Kinghorne, in company of three of his sons and a faithful dog, pointing to the splendid castle which he beautified within and without. Here, too, among other interesting pictures, is a fine one, by Lely, of Claverhouse, who often came to the house of his friend at Glamis, and whose long buff coat is still treasured in the castle. It is but one of the many relics of Glamis, which include the sword of "King James VIII." and his watch, for the Earls of Strathmore were staunch supporters of the Stuart cause. One of them, indeed, fell in the strange battle of Sheriffmuir in 1715, and in the following year Prince James, on his way to Scone, was hospitably entertained, with all his train, at the castle.

JOHN LEYLAND.



Photo. by J. Valentine and Sons,

THE CRYPT.

Dundee.

A DAY IN THE DEEPS.

TO the contemplative angler a day in the deeps is the luxury of fishing. A short walk across the fields brings him to his favourite spot at the bend of the river, where the water gradually deepens as it glides slowly along under the willow-fringed banks. Having its source in the heart of the moorlands, it is fed by numerous tiny becks, until here it expands

into a broad pellucid stream, twisting and winding in many a devious turn as it meanders slowly onwards towards the sea. Just below the quaint old village perched on the hillside, with a wide stretch of undulating brown moorland as a background, the river forms a horseshoe bend, and here both chub and roach do congregate. Just above the turn of the stream is a rippling

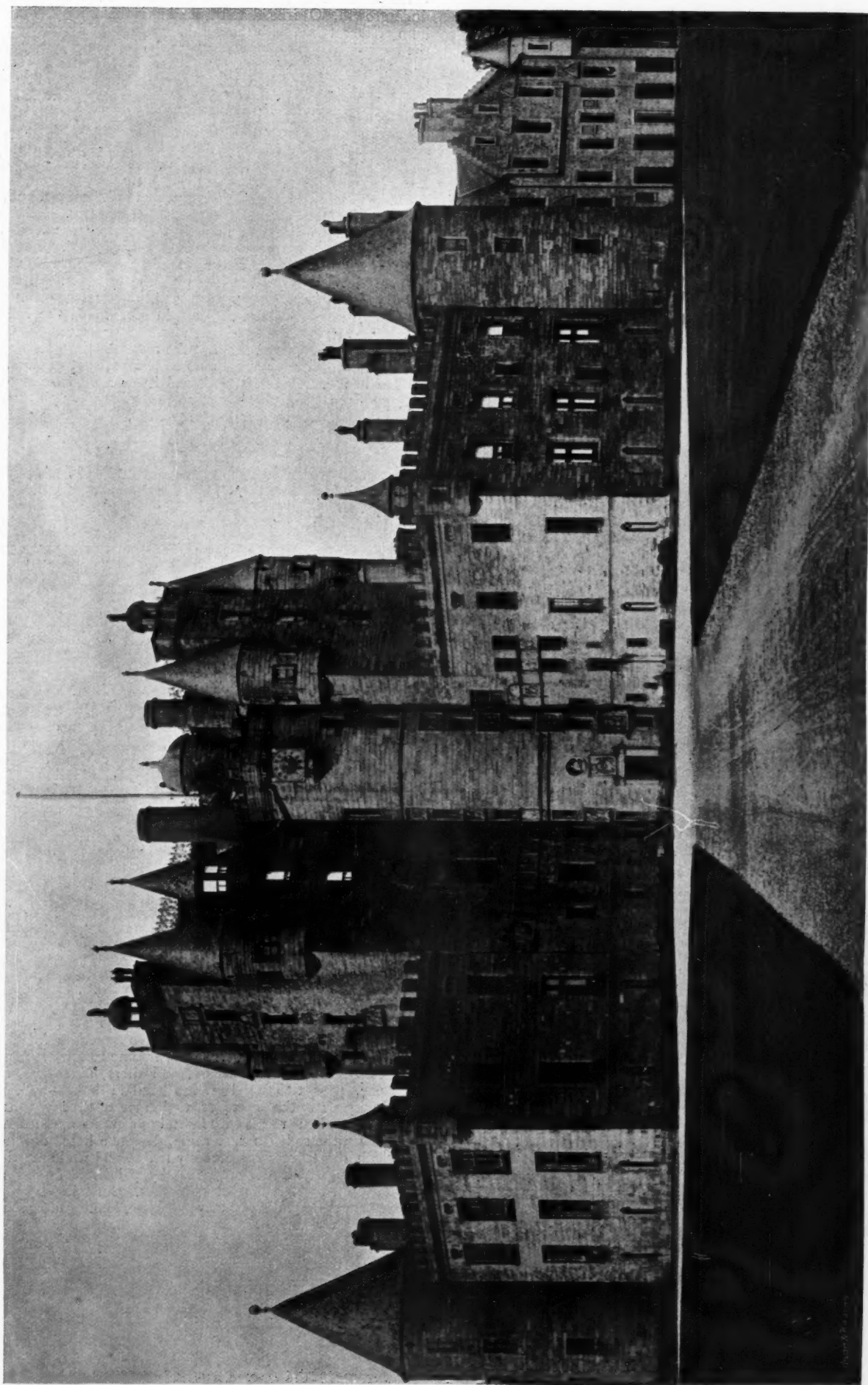


Photo. by J. Valentine and Sons,

COUNTRY HOMES: GLAMIS CASTLE.

Dunnet.

shallow that on a fine day in July glistens and gleams in the sunlight as the tiny wavelets hasten onwards, and then glide silently into the tree-shadowed deeps.

Hardly a breath of wind stirs the foliage, and the yellow iris flags are gently swaying as a slight puff of the soft west wind ruffles the surface of the pool. Here, seated under the shadow of an ancient sycamore, the rod is quietly put together, the hook baited with a couple of well-scoured gentles, cast out into the stream, and we patiently await results.

The contrast between a lazy day like this and a day's fly-fishing is great. Here we merely lounge and watch the tiny float as it travels slowly down stream. No constant casting, ever on the *qui vive* for a rise, as in the case of trout or grayling fishing; no creeping or crawling on hands and knees in order unseen to get the fly to fall like thistle-down on some favourite stream; no wading thigh deep amongst the big boulders or over the slippery rocks, casting first on the one side and then on the other, with every nerve fully strung to note the quick rise, and with instinctive turn of the wrist to send home the sharp steel barb. To-day we are provided with a book, in addition to a plentiful supply of tobacco, and can lounge idly in the shadows, casting a watchful eye ever and anon towards the tiny float that so bravely rides the mimic waves, ready to strike at the slightest stoppage in its course. The weight of the basket is not of primary importance, and even at the risk of losing a few fish we prefer to bask in the languorous heat of the July day, and to watch the blue smoke curling upwards from the welcome pipe whilst we bid adieu to all earthly cares in the meantime.

the queen of the meadow are in rich profusion near the hedge-row, and various other wild flowers, conspicuous amongst which is the purple vetch, are adding to the colour and beauty of the undergrowth. Overhead and around us is the drowsy, slumberous hum of insect life, with the gentle lapping of tiny waves against the bank as a slight breeze disturbs the surface of the deeps and then dies away. Once a kingfisher, in his glorious tropical plumage, flashes past, a white-throated dipper perches on an outjutting boulder, and, later, three plovers alight on the shingle, and then cautiously advancing to the water's edge, indulge in a bath with much flapping of wings and dipping of heads. A few swallows are skimming the surface of the stream, ever and anon touching the water, and causing mimic ever-widening circles that gradually die away.

Once more the little float is arrested in its course, and, after a few erratic movements, sails away under water. Seizing the rod, we find we are fast in a big chub, who, amidst much splashing, is soon in the net and safely landed. The air is scented with the sweet perfume of the hay, a dreamy blue haze is hovering over the fir plantations on the hillsides, the sunlight filters through the foliage overhead, the water gleams and glistens like molten silver, and a field of corn on the hillside is waving in varying shades of green as the air waves glide across it. All Nature seems asleep, but the reverberating chimes of the old clock in the village church notes the passage of time. We indulge in a frugal lunch, followed by the welcome pipe, and adding an occasional roach or chub to the basket, undisturbed by human being. As the shadows lengthen, a creaking of oars in



A YORKSHIRE VALLEY.

Far from the crowd and crush of city life, alone with our thoughts, and surrounded by rural sights and sounds, we enjoy to the full the beauty of our environment. Even here, however, we have the proverbial crumpled rose leaf, which in this instance is the swarm of buzzing flies that the pipe fails to disperse. From the meadows come the harsh rattle of the mowing machine or the hoarse croak of the corn crake, varied by the rumble of a passing trap as it crosses the bridge farther up the valley. In the fields across the river haymaking is progressing briskly, and, occasionally, softened by the distance, the murmur of voices or a burst of laughter reaches our ears. The plovers in the big pasture are uttering their plaintive cry as they wheel and sweep round an intruder who is crossing the field, and the cattle stampede with tails high in the air as, tormented beyond endurance by the gad-flies, they madly gallop round the hedge-sides. Some have sought refuge in the stream, and are standing belly deep in the water. A lot of young horses are resting under the shade of the stately elms, endeavouring with constant switching of their tails to keep off their insect pests. Overhead the deep blue sky is flecked with fleecy white clouds, that cast their shadows on the distant moorland, and, with every leaf and blade of grass, is reflected in the calm depths of the pool at our feet.

A sudden stoppage of the float puts an end to our musings, and with a quick turn of the wrist we are fast in a lively roach, which, after a brief struggle for liberty, succumbs and allows the landing-net to be placed under him. Rebaiting, we again resume our seat, admiring the clambering honeysuckle and wild roses that have climbed to the very top of the high thorn hedge, bedecking it with yellow and pink blossoms. The tiny florets of

the rowlocks is followed by a glimpse of a boat as it comes round the bend, sending the waves washing against the banks; girlish laughter and happy faces flash past us, the wash from the boat landing the float high and dry. Still we linger on till a certain chilliness in the air warns us that it is time to move. A murmur of voices causes us to look up, and there, unconscious of our presence, pass two rural swains hand in hand—and, was it merely a pose of the figure or a glimpse of the lovelight in her eyes that made us recall with lightning rapidity another day long past, when the rod was cast aside, despite a hatch of blue duns, at which the trout were greedily rising, and we lounged amidst the flickering shadows, surrounded by pale blue forget-me-nots, yellow primroses, and pink anemones, whilst the very air was redolent of spring and hope, and we, too, looking down into the deep grey eyes, read our answer there. Surely the air has become even more chilly as we wind up the line and take down the rod, whilst the white mist comes creeping up the valley. Slinging the pannier across our shoulders, we trudge slowly across the field paths, through the quaint Yorkshire stiles—our memory busy with bygone days—until we reach the narrow lane, now darkened by overhanging foliage, with deep shadows here and there, and bordered by the fragrant meadow sweet, pale dog roses, sentinel-like foxgloves, and Canterbury bells. Ere we reach our destination the stars have studded the sky and the crescent moon has risen, whilst the white mist lies like a pall over the valley. Despite the bitter-sweet memories of other days, we have refreshed both mind and body by a quiet, peaceful day's amusement, alone with Nature and at peace with all the world.

ARDAROS.

AMONGST THE PONIES.

LIKE Ariel, the ponies that run in a state of semi-wildness on the hills and moors and in the forests of Great Britain are possessed of a tricky spirit. Quaint little fellows, full of mischief, game as the proverbial pebble, and with strength and endurance which is almost incredible, they well repay a little study, and a man who takes an interest in breeding, and in the domestic animals which are amongst our proudest national possessions, may spend his time worse, and less pleasantly, too, than in studying the habits and manners, and sometimes want of manners, of the English pony in his native haunts. For the pony most emphatically has a will of his own.

South of the Border ponies run wild on the fells of Cumberland and Westmoreland, the hills and mountains of Shropshire and Wales, on the wide moors of Dartmoor and Exmoor, and in the New Forest. Of course, it is claimed by the admirers of all these breeds—and they have admirers now, enthusiastic admirers too, be it said—that they are absolutely of pure breed, and they give you any amount of vague tradition about them having existed on the hills for hundreds of years. One hale old man told me that he had lived on the farm he was residing on ninety years, and that his ancestors had lived on it I don't know how many hundreds, but some three or four, and that they had always owned a herd of ponies in the hills.

This, however, by the way. It is the ponies in the South and West, as apart from the hill ponies, that are my subject, though I must admit that there is a strong family likeness amongst all the English (and Welsh) ponies I know, and I have a shrewd suspicion that any differences there may be between them are the result of either the peculiarity of their habitat, and the nature of the food they eat, or of some cross which has been used with the idea, save the mark, of improving them.

There are some who hold that the ponies are the direct descendants of the horses that drew the war chariots of the Britons. Than this nothing could be more unlikely, for granted that hardship would cause loss of size, horses that were able to draw the cumbrous war chariots, the wheels of which made such a prodigious noise, according to our old friend Cæsar, could scarcely deteriorate and lose size to such an extent, and, moreover, horses were then much valued, and they would be and doubtless were cared for. Which is more than the ponies ever were, and the wonder is, not that the pony is a hardy and



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw.

IN THE BRACKEN.

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game little fellow, but that there is any pony at all. In years gone by not only were they neglected, their breeding left entirely to chance, but they were actually, in some places, harried off any land capable of carrying a mountain sheep, dogs being kept specially for the purpose.

I don't know a prettier sight than that of a herd of ponies jumping up in front of you as you are riding over Exmoor. The long bracken hides them, but they are on the look-out for you as you trot along on the elastic turf, and just when you come upon them there is a wild scurry, which is quite calculated to upset the equilibrium of your horse, unless he be a quiet one, or one to the manner born and used to the sights and sounds of the moor. Perhaps the stallion will neigh defiance as you pass, for pony stallions are pugnacious little beggars. Handsome little fellows are the Exmoors, standing from 11 hands 2 inches to 13 hands high, the average perhaps being about 12 hands and an inch. In colour they are brown, with tan muzzles—mealy noses, as they call them in the West. They have very broad foreheads for the size of their head, which is small, their ears are short and pricked, and they have a remarkably bright and intelligent eye. To meet they are very good, the shoulders laying well, and the forelegs well set on, but their quarters are drooping, their hind legs are crooked and their hocks are close together, the latter defects being caused probably by standing crouched up to shelter themselves from the cold winds to which they are constantly exposed. Their bone is good, and perhaps more thoroughbred in character than that of any other recognised breed of ponies. It is claimed that Sir Thomas Dyke Acland

has the only pure-bred ponies left, the other Exmoors having been crossed. Mr. Knight, of Simonsbath, used an Arab and a cross-bred cob, and he bred some good ponies by a pony Lord Arthur Cecil sent him, which hailed, I believe, from the Isle of Rum. The Exmoor is a very impressive sire, a circumstance which points out pretty clearly that he is a pure-bred animal as pure-bred animals go, and when I was in Somersetshire I saw horses by Exmoors from both cart mares and the old-fashioned, and now unfortunately nearly extinct, Devonshire pack mares which were very desirable animals to own. The weight one of the latter could carry, and the distances he could carry it with the Devon and Somerset stag-hounds, were indeed wonderful when one took his size into consideration.

From Exmoor to Dartmoor is not a very far cry, and there seems every probability that there may be some closer affinity between the Exmoor and Dartmoor ponies than

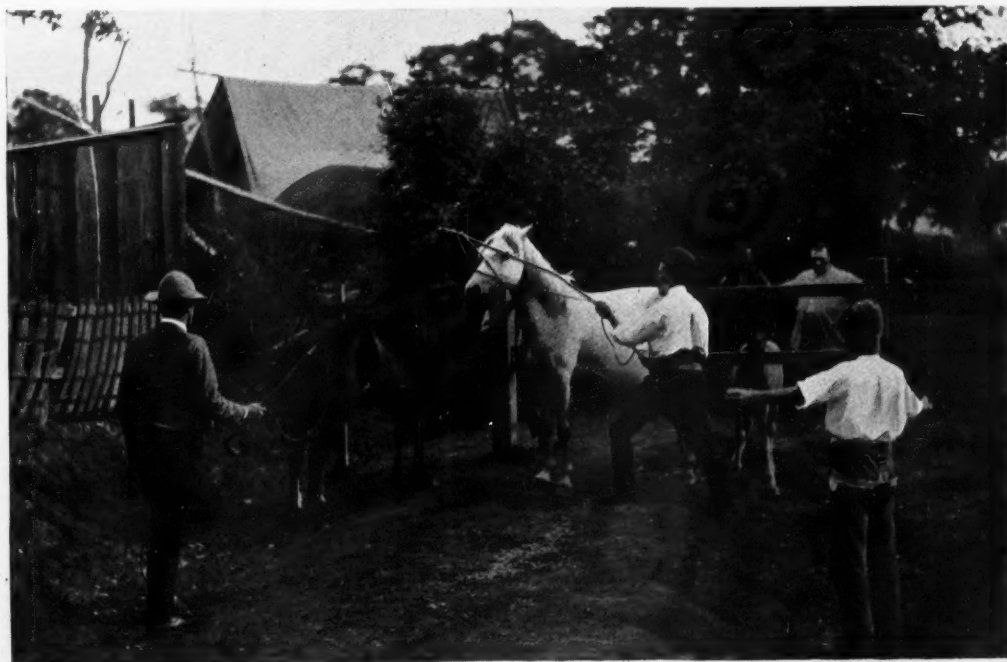


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HALTERING IN FOREST FASHION.

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between any other breeds of ponies. On Exmoor there are traditions about Spanish blood, and on Dartmoor they tell you of horses escaped from vessels belonging to the Spanish Armada which were wrecked on the coast of Devonshire. Nothing was more likely than that the ponies would stray over when they felt inclined for a change of run. But I think it by no means improbable that there has been a mixture of the breeds later than that, and of perhaps quite recent date. It is not a far cry from South Molton to Okehampton, the strip which divides the two moors, and what is more likely than that the two breeds should become mixed. At any rate, the Dartmoors nearest to Okehampton are very similar in character to Exmoors. Farther south, however, they show more difference in type, and they are also on a bigger and sturdier scale, standing from 12 hands to 13 hands 2 inches. They are very hardy, and so they had need be, as anyone who has ever been on Dartmoor on a bitter winter day with a north-east wind sweeping across it at top pace will scarcely require telling. A good few die when there is a severe spring, but those that survive are soon all right when the new grass comes. No stallion over three years old is allowed on the moor, this perhaps being a survival of the old law of Henry VIII., which made it penal to have a stallion over two years old which was not 14 hands high.

But the great home of the wild pony is the New Forest, for running wild there are some 2,500 brood mares, and 100 stallions. The Foresters cannot be said to have taken very great pains to improve their ponies until the last few years, and



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw.

AT THE WATER.

Copyright.

even now with many of them the principal consideration is, "Will the pony survive the winter in the forest?" If he will he is a pony after the Forester's own heart, for then all he makes is profit. In the New Forest are ponies of all colours, and there does not seem to be that prejudice against greys or chestnuts which prevails in some districts, but roans are not liked. A brown or a tan muzzle, however, is preferred. That many of the ponies have good blood in their veins is evident, and it is undoubted that at one time Murske, the sire of Eclipse, was travelling the district at a small fee, and it is pretty certain that there are descendants of his now in the forest. To relate the squabbles which have arisen from time to time between the Foresters and the Crown, to relate one-half of the old forest customs, some of which still exist, would fill a volume. During the last few years an attempt has been made to introduce new blood, and to exercise some supervision over the stallions that

are turned into the forest, but though much has been done, much remains to do. Still there is every encouragement to persevere, for already there is a marked improvement in type.

A visitor to the forest, if he possibly can, should see A COLT HUNT, and if he is allowed he should take part in it. He will have to gallop over such ground as he has probably never galloped over before, and he will have been astonished many a time before he dismounts from his New Forest pony, whose speed, endurance, and weight-carrying power are really marvellous. I have seen a 13-3 pony that can carry a seventeen stone man and gallop with him. A gallop after a wild New Forest colt is exciting work indeed, and the Foresters will talk with as much enthusiasm about a good colt hunt as you and I will, my fox-hunting friend, about that fast forty minutes, in which, if we did not go well, we went to our own satisfaction.

RED ROVER.



Photo. by C. Reid, Wishaw.

A COLT HUNT.

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COMPENSATION FOR DISTURBANCE.

"VERY well," said Miss Ursula. "Yes. I'll come with you on your fishing, but only on the condition that you take Bob too."

This was a concession coupled with a qualification. Miss Ursula's companionship was an unmixed joy, but there were elements not altogether joyful in the society of her young brother Bob. Moreover, she aggravated the situation a moment later, even before I had acquiesced in the coming of Bob, by adding, "And Snap."

Snap was her fox-terrier—white, noisy, truculent, disobedient; the last dog in the world that one would wish as one's

friend for a fishing excursion on a clear chalk stream, where every fish has to be stalked and angled for on the most scientific methods. Nevertheless, the lady's conditions were, of course, imperative. I accepted "with both hands."

So we set out, a fairly well-pleased little party. *En route* we met David Webster, who has a rod on the same water. He has also a *penchant* similar to my own for Miss Ursula. In a word, we are rivals, both in our fishing and our affections. It is always rather a sore point when one catches more fish, or more of Miss Ursula's company, than the other. At the moment of our present meeting my star was in the ascendant. David

looked black, recognising that I had the better of him in the lady's regard for the nonce. He paid me out on the fishing score. "Not a very likely little lot to go fishing with," he said, with a whispered sneer, as we parted, indicating the white terrier and the blatant boy.

"I'll back my evening's catch against yours for a sovereign," was my answer; and "the fool's argument" was promptly accepted.

And so we fared to the river, flowing along slow, lazy, and pellucid, through the meadows of lush pasture grass. Just below a small clump of elms, where a bush of bramble in beautiful flower almost overhung the river's bank, we came to a halt while I put up my tackle and deftly anointed, with the oil brush, a small quill gnat.

By the time preparations were ready, Miss Ursula and I had had quite a little chat, Snap had been scolded into quiescence and was curled up at his mistress's feet, and Bob had promised, with great earnestness, to keep back from the river's bank.

Behind a tuft of yellow kingcup I crept to the margin and waited. Here and there I could see a fish moving among the weeds, but never one that broke the surface, though there was no lack of small fly. Presently, however, one, a good one, came up and swallowed a gnat, scarcely making a ripple. I prepared to cast for him. Twice I had sent my fly out, measuring my distance, and the third time was about to drop it over the fish's nose, when a splash and a scuffle, and a wrangle in the water above me, took my attention off. The cast fell anyhow. I looked up in surprise, that turned to swift indignation at seeing Snap and Bob, not only on the bank, to the certain scaring of the fish, but actually in the water, struggling, yelling, splashing, in a way calculated to put down every feeding fish within a quarter of a mile. Most cruel feature of the whole dramatic episode, Miss Ursula stood on the river's bank applauding the splashers in the water.

"What is it?" I asked, feebly.

"A rat, a water-rat," Miss Ursula answered. "Oh, hold on to him, Bob, hold on to him; let Snap have him. See," she said, turning to me again, "Bob caught the rat by the tail, and the rat caught Bob by the hand, and now I want Snap to kill the rat, but I'm afraid of his biting Bob, and oh! do come and help them, do."

"Come and help them!"

Wrathfully and slowly I gathered in my line, and laying the rod down, stepped the few yards up the bank to where the boy, the dog, and the rat, still engaged in their triangular duel, were just emerging from the water. But the odds were too heavy for the rat—who had all my sympathy—and he succumbed at the moment that I reached the scene of battle. Snap emphasised the situation by shaking water from his coat all over all of us. The only thing that gave me pleasure at all was the ruddy stream of gore that flowed from Bob's hand where the rat had bitten him. That afforded me some satisfaction, so that even when Miss Ursula said to me admiringly, "Was it not plucky of him to keep hold of the rat?" I could still smile and say in crocodilian sympathy: "Oh, splendid!"

And after this I went back to my rod. Fishing, I thought,

was out of the question, except so far down below the scene of all this water-baby business that I should be encroaching on David Webster. A cloud of yellow soil was rolling down through the pellucid waters of the chalk stream. It was abominable!

Judge of my surprise when, at the very edge of the rolling yellow cloud, I saw a good and decisive rise. Another followed it. A third. Soon, in the margin of the yellow cloud and just below it, the water was ringed and fretted with the circles, intersecting, that the feeding fish had described. In the common phrase, the water was in a boil of rises. I threw a hurried and unskilful fly into the tumult, and instantly was fast in a good fish. With rising trout about me I gave him no mercy, dealing with him to the utmost power of the fine cast. In a few minutes he was in the landing-net, and thence transferred to the basket. Again a hurried throw took another good fish; and yet again I was in one or two more before the yellow muddied cloud had cleared away and left the water pure and undisturbed as before the rat and dog and boy fiasco.

The finish of that evening's fishing was that I had a half-dozen brace of trout in my basket, and David Webster, when we saw him next morning, could not boast of a single fish that was worth the keeping. So I won the sovereign; and I won honour and favour in Miss Ursula's eyes too. "Some people," she said, "would have been quite cross with Bob for disturbing the water and the fish. You were so good about it."

"Was I?" I did not think it necessary to tell her that I did not feel quite good inside all the while.

Now I have not the slightest doubt that the disturbance of

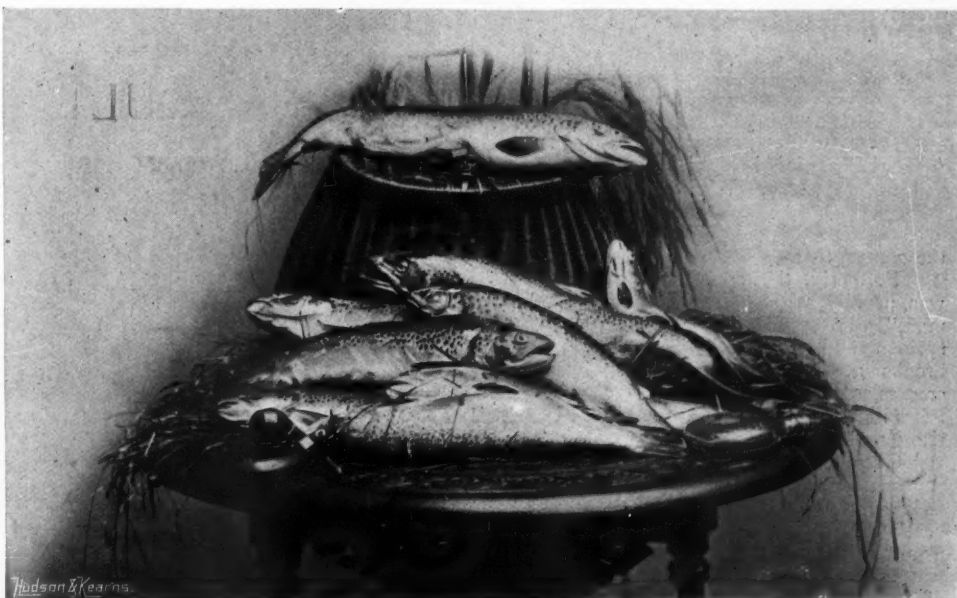


Photo. by A. W. Cox,

A GOOD CATCH.

Nottingham.

the water by the rat-catching episode befuddled those solemn chalk stream trout into thinking a spate was coming, just as we used to befool the little moorland trout in Scotland by a similar device. But the funny thing is that I have several times since tried to befool them by a similar expedient, but never with any success; so that I am inclined to look upon the result as due to some occult influence of Miss Ursula—an influence which, of my own experience, I am quite ready to affirm that she possesses.

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

YOUNG novelists may come and they may go, but Sir Walter Besant retains his grip of the public fancy. And he retains it justly, because he cannot be matched for versatility. It is only recently that his book, "A Fountain Sealed" (Chatto and Windus), has come into our hands. It is, so to speak, a modern historical novel; for it is founded on the story of an alleged courtship or *liaison* between George, Prince of Wales, and a lady variously named as Lightfoot, Wheeler, and Lightfoot. To this story the late W. J. Thoms appears to have devoted very considerable attention, and to have demonstrated that there did exist a Hannah Lightfoot, that she was a Quakeress, that she was married to one Axford and expelled from the Society of Friends because the ceremony was performed by a priest, and that as George, Prince of Wales, was only about fifteen years old at the time of this marriage, the odds are that the whole story about the *liaison* was probably as untrue as possible. *Prima facie* one would imagine that this was about as unpromising material as could be conceived for the basis of a novel, but to the real novelist, to the man who can create, difficulties are as nothing. Having satisfied himself the old scandal was false, Sir Walter sets himself to work to divest that story of its vicious apparel and to imagine the pure courtship as it might have been. Briefly, he makes the Prince, who does not disclose his identity until the very end, carry

on his courtship to the very verge of marriage, and at the last moment, the King having died, Prince George's brother Edward salutes him as the King, and the Quaker maiden knows that her life's romance is to become a memory and not an actuality. The virtues of the book are many, and one of them is present on every page. That is, the delicacy, the grace, and the ease of Sir Walter Besant's style. *Nihil te i, it quod non ornabit* may fairly be said of him, but he has never written more prettily than in this book. There is quaintness as well as truth in his description of the gloomy Quaker society, and of the temporary melancholia of the sweet heroine due to the "dreadful complacency" with which her sanctimonious and fraudulent brother Joseph (there is a memory of Sheridan in this name) proves the certainty of eternal punishment. Ourselves have heard this same doctrine innocently described as "the comfort of endless generations." Delightful in the extreme is the part of the book in which the Quaker maiden is awakened to life under the innocent influence of refined art and music and dancing, and the story of the courtship is full of charm.

For the climax it is of infinite tenderness and pathos. Edward, the Prince's brother, comes in to announce that the King is dead and to salute George as the King. "Our simple artless Love could not live beneath the shadow of the Crown. 'Dei gratia,' he murmured, 'by the grace of God.' Then he turned

to me, and his brother rose. 'Nancy,' he said, solemnly, 'Fate calls me. I am now the King—unworthy. Pray for me. My brother will see thee. What has passed I pray thee to forget. Thou art all goodness, Nancy. Farewell. Be happy.' He stooped and kissed my head—and I fell back. When I recovered they were gone, and my cousin was weeping beside me. Sometimes I think it would have been better for me if I had died that day. But yet . . . no—I have still these tender memories, which I have tried to set down. I can think of my gallant Prince; I can remember how he loved me. Surely no woman was ever loved so well. This short chapter makes all my life. And I was the first—yes, the first. I was the first. When I meet him in the world to come, I shall go up to him fearlessly. I shall say, 'George, you loved me first. I was the first. You loved me before the Other came across the sea. A man's first love is best. You loved me first, and since I have never ceased to love you, I think that my image must be in your heart still.' On the whole this is a beautiful and a pure-souled book.

We do not know, perhaps we ought to know, whether Miss Mary F. A. Trench, the author of "Where the Surf Breaks" (Hurst and Blackett), is related to the gifted man who in "Realities of Irish Life" has produced the most vivid picture of life in Ireland that has come under our notice. But we think she must be, and if so the sketches of Irish life which come from her pen are worthy of the literary reputation of her family. In truth they are both powerful and fascinating; both vivid and amusing; both true and tender. In a word, they are Irish, and as one turns the pages there grows up in the mind, or the heart, call it which you will, a disposition to feel personal attachment to the persons portrayed, particularly for the squire, Mr. Fitzgerald, and his daughter. Excellently good reading is to be found in this book, and it carries the reader away in sympathy, so that he weeps with Miss Trench when she is in sorrowful mood, and smiles with her when her quiet humour bubbles forth.

"From the Land of the Snow Pearls," by Ella Higginson (Macmillan), is American, distinctly American, and has succeeded greatly in the United States. Unlike the stern reviewer of the *Academy*, we have, however, taken up Miss Higginson's book without apprehension, for we venture to plume ourselves upon something approaching to a cosmopolitan power of appreciation. Some men swear by Stevenson, some by Ruskin, and so on *ad infinitum*, and they will taste of no literary wine save that which has one special bouquet. For ourselves,

the more kinds of book we can enjoy the greater are our opportunities of pleasure, and we like good American writing, whether it be quaint, as Mark Twain's is, or the mingled humour and pathos of Bret Harte, or delicate mosaic like that of Mr. Howells. These stories of Miss Higginson's deal with the stiff and simple life of the farming folk in America, they are well told, they convey a true picture to the mind, and they are well worth reading.

August is gone and September is with us; we begin to hear tidings of new books for the autumn. To some of these we look forward with much interest. Few men could be better qualified to write with the authority of experience than Mr. H. G. Keene, under the title, "A Servant of John Company," and the subject is of the most promising kind. The book will be published by Messrs. Tracker, of Calcutta. Our anticipations of Mr. Archibald Forbes's "Life of Napoleon III." (Chatto and Windus) are mixed. The battle scenes are sure to be painted with the pictorial vigour and the glowing phrase which have marked Mr. Forbes as a really great war correspondent. Whether Mr. Forbes is quite capable of dealing with the political intricacies of the Emperor's life, we do not feel quite sure. Moreover, so long as the Empress Eugenie lives, there are serious difficulties in the way of writing the life of that strange and unhappy monarch. Mr. Watson's "Racing and Chasing" (Longmans) is sure to be good, for Mr. Watson knows his subject thoroughly, and he can write. We do not expect to learn much from Mr. G. W. Steevens's "With the Conquering Turk—the Confessions of a Bashi Bazouk," for we do not regard Mr. Steevens as a very thoughtful person, and we think he takes himself too seriously. But we expect to be a good deal amused by them, for he has great descriptive powers, and a very pretty, perhaps too pretty, trick of style.

Books to order from the library:—

"Johnsonian Miscellanies." Arranged by George Birkbeck Hill. (Clarendon Press.)

"The White Hecatomb and Other Stories." By W. C. Scully. (Methuen.)

"A Rash Verdict." By Leslie Keith. (Bentley.)

"Salted with Fire." By George Macdonald. (Hurst and Blackett.)

"The Silence Broken." By G. M. Robins. (Hurst and Blackett.)

"Calamus." Letters by Walt Whitman, edited by R. M. Bucke. (Boston, Maynard.)

WATER-CRESS CULTURE.

THE artificial culture of water-cress is comparatively modern, and a remarkably pretty side-industry of the country.

Formerly, the cress gatherer was usually a gipsy, or "vagrom man," who wandered up to the springs and by the head waters of brooks at dawn, and took his cresses as the mushroom gatherer takes mushrooms—by dint of early rising and trespass.

The places where water-cress grows naturally are usually singularly attractive. The plant grows best where springs actually bubble from the ground, either where the waters break out on the lower sides of the chalk downs, or in some limestone-begotten stream where springs rise, sometimes for a distance of one or two miles, bubbling and swelling in the very bed of the brook. There, among dead reeds and flags, the pale green cresses appear very early in the spring, for the water is always warmer which rises from the bosom of the earth. Trout and wild duck haunt the same spots, and one often sees, stuck on a board in the stream, a notice warning off the poor water-cress gatherer, who was supposed to poach the fish.

The happy-go-lucky cress gathering is now a thing of the past, and there are few rural industries more skilfully and profitably conducted than cress growing. We can cite the case of a farmer who, having lost all his capital on a large farm on the downs, took as a last resource to growing the humble "creases" by the springs below. He has now made money once more, and been able to take and cultivate another farm nearly as large as that he worked before, while the area of his water-cress beds still grows.

Wherever a chalk stream, however small, breaks out of the hills, it is usual to let it to a water-cress grower. He widens the channels, and year by year every square foot of the upper waters is planted with cress. Each year, too, new and larger beds are added below, and the cresses creep down the stream. This is very bad for trout; but the beds are pretty enough, forming successive flats, on different levels, of vivid green.

The scene on THE WATER-CRESS FARM shows the complete metamorphosis undergone by what was once a swift running brook when once the new culture is taken in hand.



Photo by H. W. Taunt,

A WATER-CRESS FARM.

Oxford.

When left to Nature, the little chalk stream might truly have said, in the words of the poem:

"I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses,
I linger by my shingly bars,
I loiter round my cresses."

Now all the brambles and shingle are gone, and the stream is condemned to "loiter round its cresses," and to do nothing else. The water must not be more than six inches deep, and it must not flow too fast. To secure these conditions little dams, some made of earth and some of boards, are built from side to side of the brook. The water thus appears to descend in a series of steps, each communicating with the next by earthen pipes, through which the water spouts. When a fresh bed of cresses is to be planted, which is done usually towards the end of summer, a sluice is opened, and only an inch or so of water left. On this cuttings from the cress are strewn, which soon take root, and make a bed fit for gathering by next spring.

From February to April the cresses are at their best. Their flavour is good, their leaves crisp, and they come at a time when no outdoor salad can be grown. As the beds are set close to the fresh springs, they are seldom frozen. Hence, in very

hard weather all the birds flock to the cress beds, where they find running water and a certain quantity of food. If the beds do freeze, the cress is destroyed, and the loss is very serious.

GATHERING CRESSES is a very pleasant job in summer, but in early spring one of the most cheerless occupations conceivable short of gathering Iceland moss. The men wear waterproof boots, reaching up the thighs, and thick stockings inside these. But the water is icy cold. The cress plants are then not tall, as they are later, but short and bushy. They need careful picking, too, in order not to injure the second crop. Then the cold and dripping cresses have to be trimmed, tied into bundles, and packed. For packing, a different class of basket is used from those shown in our picture. These are for receiving the cress as it is picked. When "dressed" it is laid in strong, flat hampers, called flats, the lids of which are squeezed down tight on the cress. The edges are then cut neatly with a sharp knife, and the baskets placed in running water, until the carts are ready to drive them to the station. Not London only but the great towns of the North consume the cress grown in the South of England. A great part of that grown in the springs which break out under the Berkshire Downs goes to Manchester.

One basket holds about 200 large bunches. From each of these a dozen of the small bunches, retailed at a penny each can be made, and every square rod of the cress bed yields two baskets at a cutting.



Photo. by H. W. Taunt,

GATHERING CRESSES.

Oxford.

In one of the East London suburbs, near to the reservoirs of a water company, it has been found worth while to create an artificial spring, by making an arrangement with the waterworks for a constant supply. This flows from a stand-pipe and irrigates the cress beds, which produce good cresses, though not of such fine flavour as those grown in natural spring water and upon a chalk soil.

EASTBOURNE CROQUET TOURNAMENT.

WHETHER for lawn tennis or any other game or sport, the entries are invariably good at Devonshire Park. Certainly the recent croquet tournament was no exception to the general rule. In the All-Comers' Singles the entry list totalled up to forty-three, and amongst the number were to be found the names of almost all the best players. An entry of thirty was obtained for the Ladies' Singles. The draw took place on Saturday evening, and was conducted by Mr. A. Standen-Triggs and Prebendary Miller. Devonshire Park was looking extremely well when a commence-

ment was made in the tournament. Six courts were in use before luncheon, and two more afterwards, the greater majority of these being in capital order. The weather was anything but comfortable, more especially so for the ladies, as the wind was extremely high and was continually interfering with their strokes. The weather was not by any means propitious on the second day, rain falling off and on most of the time, but, notwithstanding, the players kept on with their matches, and enabled the referees to show a capital day's record, over forty matches having been decided in addition to four or five walks over. The spectators, too, were fairly numerous throughout the day, and they also braved the elements, apparently taking great interest in the games.

Many more spectators visited Devonshire Park on the third day, between four and five hundred being seated round the court in which Mr. Willis played Mr. Carter. The match, by the sanction of the committee of management, was the best of three games. Once again, as was recently the case at Maidstone, Mr. Willis won after losing the opening game, and this was by no uncertain number of points, as although Mr. Carter had not the opening he roqueted the corner ball and kept his opponent from making any hoops for a long time. Mr. Carter did not make any long breaks, but keeping the balls well together, eventually won by twenty-five points. In the second game Mr. Willis had more chances, and made breaks of eight and seven, running his hoops in fine style. Mr. Carter, when once well in position for the four-ball break, missed a short roquet. In the third game Mr. Willis's shooting was extremely fine, no distance on the ground seeming too far for him,



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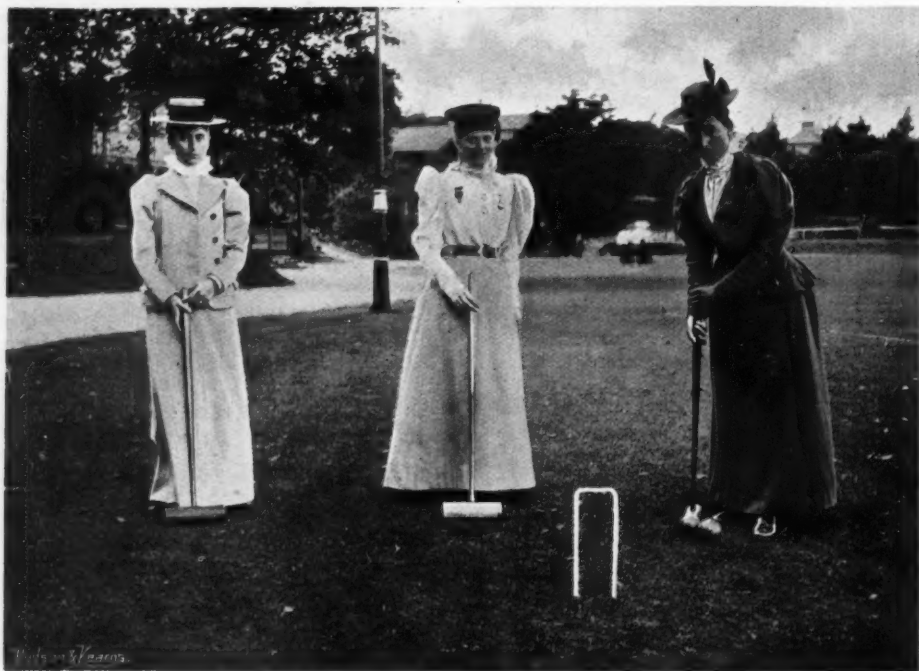
SOME OF THE WINNERS.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

and again being in good form as to running his hoops, he eventually won by ten points after Mr. Carter had made up a great number of hoops just before the finish. The match was watched with the greatest interest, and the good strokes well

applauded. On Friday the weather was beautifully fine, and capital progress was made with the tournament. The attendance was again very large, and the final match in the All-Comers' Singles between Mr. Willis and Captain Drummond was watched with the greatest interest. The opening game was very close, and should have been won by Captain Drummond, but he tried to peg out the black before the latter had made the last hoop, and this brought about his defeat. Larger breaks were made in the second game; both players scored a nine, and again the play was close, but a rather fluky shot just before the finish got Mr. Willis in possession of the balls, and he won by four points. Mr. Willis certainly deserved his win.

The tournament was brought to a conclusion on Saturday. The chief event was the final of the Ladies' Singles, and this produced an obstinate struggle between Mrs. Blackett and Miss Stone, who played three games, which lasted all the afternoon and well into the evening until the moon had risen and the fairy lamps glowed among the trees in the park. The third game was particularly close. Four hoops before the end Miss Stone led, but Mrs. Blackett overhauled her, and looked an easy winner, but by some dashing play Miss Stone beat her opponent off and crept up to within three points. Mrs. Blackett then brought off a fine long shot, and gained a clever victory.



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PROMINENT PLAYERS.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

MR. JERSEY'S HOUSE AT KENNETT.



Photo. by W. A. Rouch.

REGAL LODGE

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MR. JERSEY—to give the assumed name of the most prominent of the lady race-horse owners of the present day—has, in 1897, had by far the most successful season on the Turf since her racing colours—turquoise and fawn hoops, turquoise cap—were first registered in the *Calendar*. Fred Webb, who has charge of Mr. Jersey's horses, has proved himself as capable a trainer of race-horses as he was a jockey in his best day, and how good that was needs no telling to those whose racing experience extends back fifteen or twenty years.

As a side result of the boom in Australian race-horses, which was started by the purchase of Carbine, the equine champion of the Southern Seas, and kept going by the subsequent importation of many famous performers from the Antipodes, Mr. Jersey recently speculated in some Australian

bloodstock, and speculated to some extent successfully. Maluma, who by several flying successes in her native land earned the sobriquet of "The Greyhound of the Southern Seas," was one of Mr. Jersey's purchases, and another, which has, so far, been the more profitable venture, was Merman, who somewhat unexpectedly carried off the Lewes Handicap on the last afternoon of the Sussex fortnight. Another conspicuous success of the Jersey jacket in the current season was the victory of the outsider Brayhead in the Liverpool Cup, while several minor races have fallen to other animals in the stable, amongst whom Milford and Amberite have done their owner good service.

Mr. Jersey, who, it is almost needless to say, takes the keenest interest in her racing stable, when at Newmarket resides at Regal Lodge, Kennett, a view of which is given above.

THE ST. LEGER.

FOUR short words, "the worst on record," are quite sufficient to sum up this year's St. Leger. To begin with, the field, with one exception, was about as bad a one as ever went to the post for this race, and that exception so far in front of everything else as to completely destroy all uncertainty about the result. Then, again, it was an utterly false run race, and although the best horse won, he did not do so in the same brilliant style as characterised his Two Thousand and Derby victories. In fact, Wood had to ride him hard with his hands, for a few strides, to resist Chelandry's challenge, and he was only three-quarters of a length in front of her as they passed the post.

The immediate effect of this was a wholly undue amount of fault finding with the winner's performance. "Velasquez would have beaten him had he run," said some; "this form has no chance for the Cesarewitch," said others; and much more to the same effect. This is all nonsense. Had Velasquez gone to the post, the race would probably have been differently run, and he might never have got so near to the winner as Chelandry did. As to the Cesarewitch, last week's race tells us nothing, and Galtee More's chance for it is neither better nor worse than it was before his St. Leger victory. If he is a real stickler, he will as nearly as possible win, if not quite; but of that it is impossible for anyone to form any reliable opinion. He has won all his this year's engagements with ease, but that tells us nothing as to his stamina, for the simple reason that he has never yet had to tackle a stayer of his own class over a distance of ground, unless Velasquez should turn out to be one, which is, to say the least of it, unlikely.

There is nothing about which so many mistakes are made as this. Here we have two horses, Velasquez and Galtee More, the former a very speedy colt but a supposed non-stayer, the latter generally believed to be better over long courses than short ones. And yet, whenever these two have met, the longer the distance the better fight has the non-stayer made of it.



Photo. by W. A. Rouch. CORNER OF THE PADDOCK, DONCASTER.

Copyright—"C.L."

What a surprise it would create if Velasquez's *forte* were ever discovered to be stamina, and Galtee More's speed. It is not likely to happen, of course, and their two very different styles of action certainly do not favour the idea. At the same time, the last St. Leger winner has proved, both at home and in public, that he has a tremendous turn of speed, and it is only his thorough stamina that has to be taken on trust. He is probably rather a better class horse than either St. Gatien or Robert the Devil; whether or not he is the real stayer that those two undoubtedly were, the result of next month's Cesarewitch will tell us.

But let us get to our subject—this year's St. Leger. If ever there was a one-horse race, it was this—10 to 1 on the favourite!—and when the five numbers went up all interest in the result was confined to placing the second and third. The next best-looking candidate in the paddock was Silver Fox, about whom 33 to 1 could have been had, but he is a disappointing sort of brute, and will probably only do his best when he likes.

The American-bred St. Cloud II., who has been talked about in connection with the Cesarewitch, was much fancied for a place, but he is a heavy, coachy sort of beast, and terribly short in front. Goletta is a beautiful mare, though she looked a bit dull in her coat, and Chelandry, always a charming filly, of the light, wiry type, looked better than she ever has before this year. As they cantered past the stands, Galtee More and Chelandry went best of anything; Goletta was pulling and fighting for her head, and St. Cloud II.'s round action was hardly suggestive of staying.

And yet, in the race itself, he did stay, if indeed it can be called a race, and if they ever went fast enough to find out what stayed and what did not. Goletta made all the running, after the first hundred yards, more or less closely attended by the American, but the pace was dreadfully slow; and although she was two or three lengths in front all along the far side, past the rifle butts, and right into the straight, she was always pulling, and it is difficult to understand why the favourite was content to wait so far behind till less than half a mile from home. Goletta was



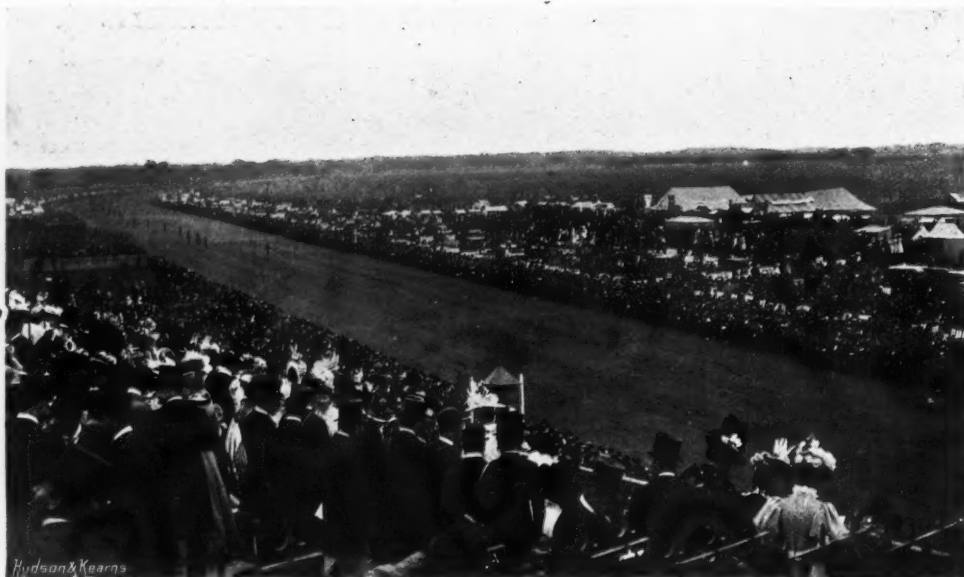
Photo. by W. A. Rouch.

BEFORE THE ST. LEGER.

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done with then, and the favourite was at last allowed to lead. Up to this point it had been no race at all, and it now became a three furlong scurry, in which Chelandry came with a rattle at the distance, and compelled Wood to sit down and ride the big horse with his hands. He never hit him, and the moment the gallant son of Kendal and Morganette realised what was required of him, he drew away, and won his race. St. Cloud II. finished third, a neck only behind Chelandry, Silver Fox was fourth, and Goletta a long way last.

The muster at the post presented a striking contrast to the big fields of starters that were seen out in the years when Memnon came home first of a lot of thirty runners, when Tarrare and Matilda beat twenty-six and twenty-five other horses respectively, and the great leathering Birmingham was hailed the winner in a field of twenty-eight. The oldest inhabitant, not a mythical individual in this connection, but a veritable entity, who was present at his 71st St. Leger, so it was said, when Galtee More scrambled home from his four opponents,



Photo, by W. A. Rouch.

VIEW DOWN THE COURSE.

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must, indeed, have found food for reflection after the race in all the features of the 122nd St. Leger—"the worst on record."

RACING NOTES.

THERE was plenty of good sport at Doncaster last week, though, taken as a whole, the meeting was hardly up to its usual standard, and the dullness of this year's St. Leger seemed to more or less overshadow the whole four days. The most interesting feature of the week was the two year old racing, among which the Champagne Stakes resulted in a real old-fashioned surprise.

That this event would be won either by Florio Rubattino or Mauchline, few doubted, and the only question was, which of the pair would it be? They had both been out once, and each had won in irrefragable style. Mr. McCalmont's colt had won the New Stakes in a canter, when only half fit, beating Rhoda B. and the Jenny Howlet colt; whilst Lord Rosebery's filly had shown her heels to Lowood and Royal Footstep in the Gimcrack Stakes at York. Of these two performances it was generally accepted that "Florio's" was the better, added to which he was thought to have come on since Ascot, while he is, moreover, the better-looking of the two.

A really beautiful filly is Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's Ayah, by Ayrshire out of Biserta. She is all quality, use, and action, and her only fault is that there is not enough of her. At the same time, she had finished a long way behind Mr. McCalmont's colt in the New Stakes, so that there was no encouragement to back her here. The best-looking of the rest was the novice Royal Sport, a very racing-like colt indeed, and one who will not be long before he wins a race. Although he got off last, or nearly so, he was right in front at the bend, and looked to have a capital chance, till Florio Rubattino drew to the front, and, striding along comfortably, had practically won his race. And yet he failed to do so. At the half distance, the hitherto unnoticed Ayah swooped down upon him, and going at a tremendous pace, got home half a length in front of him, almost before anyone realised what was happening.

If this form is correct it upsets many preconceived ideas about this season's two year olds. Ayah could hardly extend Champ de Mars at Goodwood, and the latter proved himself inferior to Disraeli at Derby. It would, therefore, go to prove that nothing which ran either in the New Stakes or Gimcrack Stakes is in anything like the first class, and that all this form is a long way behind that of such as Champ de Mars, Orzil, Cap Martin, Cyllene, and Disraeli. I think it more likely, however, that the Champagne Stakes form was wrong, and if the race were to be run over again to-morrow, many of those who saw it would still back the second. Royal Sport was third, and Mauchline fourth.

The Great Yorkshire Handicap, run over the old St. Leger course, brought out a good field of handicappers, and was an interesting affair. The six year old Waler, Acmena (8st. 8lb.) was made favourite at 9 to 2, on the strength of her recent Newmarket and Gatwick victories. That handsome little three year old, Prime Minister (6st. 11lb.) was backed at the same price. Asterie, of the same age, and with 4lb. less to carry, had friends at 5 to 1, and the same price was taken about the very useful five year old Carlton Grange (7st. 12lb.). The Ebor Handicap winner, Harvest Money, tried to treat his field in the same fashion that he did at York, but he was meeting an altogether different class here, and was not allowed to stay in front for more than a quarter of a mile. For a time Acmena looked dangerous, then Asterie had the best of it, but Carlton Grange was only biding his time, and, going to the front at the distance, shook off Jaquemart, and won cleverly by three parts of a length. The latter's efforts have hitherto been confined to shorter distances, but he ran like a stayer here, as it is likely enough that he is, being by Martagon. The winner's performance points strongly to the Cesarewitch chance of Merman, who, with 5lb. the best of the weights, gave him a half length beating at Lewes.

A tremendous field of twenty-one went to the post for the Glasgow Plate, a five-furlong handicap for two year olds. The Liverpool winner, Bicorniger (8st. 3lb.), was made favourite, and among others backed were Allegro (8st. 11lb.), St. Lucia (7st. 7lb.), Goodwin Sands (7st. 11lb.), and Green Room (7st. 5lb.). St. Lucia looked like winning till close home, when Lord Rosebery's Alizarine, a daughter of Bona Vista and Rose Madder, got the best of the race, and won by three parts of a length.

The second day's sport was of a very moderate description, even the St. Leger, which will be found fully described in another part of this number, failing to excite the slightest interest. Matters improved, however, on Thursday, when business began with a field of fourteen going to the post for the Wharcliffe Stakes. A lot of these were backed, but the winner turned up in the 10 to 1 chance, Mount Prospect, by Gallinule out of Gretchen, who is evidently a useful three year old over this distance and in this sort of class. Wildfowler, who came with a great reputation, won the Rous Plate. Dinna Forget was backed for the Alexandra Plate of a mile and a quarter, Phœbus Apollo, getting 16lb. for the year, being second in demand. Their positions were exactly reversed in the race, as Mr. Theobald's four year old went to the front nearly a quarter of a mile from home, and, never afterwards headed, won by three



Photo by W. A. Rouch. ST. LEGER; CHELANDRY GOING OUT.

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lengths from Dinna Forget. The latter had none the best of the luck, and ran quite well enough to have a chance for the Cambridgeshire with only 7st. 4lb.

Rumour has for a long time been busy with the merits of Captain Greer's two year old Wildfowler, by Gallinule out of Tragedy, who ran third to Lucknow and Stream of Gold, for the Plantation Stakes, at Newmarket, when only a quarter fit. Everyone was therefore on the look out for him in the Champagne Stakes, for which event, however, he did not put in an appearance, being kept for the Rous Plate on Thursday. He is a big fine colt, and looks like making a slashing great three year old, but I cannot truthfully say that I quite liked him. To my mind he is a bit coarse, and is very straight and proppy on his fore-legs. At the same time, he made the whole of the running, and won like a good horse. St. Ia and Tears of Joy both had a cut at him inside the distance, but they both failed to get on terms, and had to put up with second and third places, though it must not be forgotten that they were giving him 9lb. and 7lb. respectively.

The Portland Plate brought out fifteen runners, among whom were some very speedy customers. This was won by Kilkeran, a three year old by Ayrshire out of Maid of Lorn, who was backed for a lot of money for the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood, which race he was thought to have been unlucky not to win. It was a good race between him and Ugly; the latter failing, as usual, to quite stay home, suffered defeat by a head. Kilcock, who was giving 2st. 12lb. to the first, and 17lb. to the second, finished a good third, and would certainly have won had he got off anything like as well as the winner.

The Doncaster Stakes and the Cup, on the last day, both resulted in matches. In the first Butter was asked to give 3lb. to Merle, with the result that odds of 11 to 10 were laid on Sir R. W. Griffith's filly. This was not justified by the result, as the non-favourite made all the running, and won in a canter by ten lengths. The Cup was a still hollower affair, as Winkfield's Pride, with 4 to 1 laid on him, waited on Jaquemart to the last bend, where he drew away at his ease, and won by four lengths.

The Prince of Wales's Nursery Plate, on the same day, produced another surprise. M.D. had always run like a stayer, so that he looked to have a great



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chance with 8st. 5lb. King's Messenger (7st. 4lb.) was a good deal fancied, and started favourite; whilst Snow—a daughter of Sir Hugo and Ice—and Kirkfell also had plenty of friends. The Baker had run badly both at Stockton and York, and he was not thought of here with 8st. 7lb. I have more than once stated in these notes that this colt's last two races should be ignored, and have given my reasons for saying so. He here confirmed my opinion by winning his race in a canter from Foxstones, to whom he was giving 13lb., and seventeen others. At the same time, his action and general style are more suggestive of speed than stamina, so that I was hardly prepared to see him win this race over the Sandall Mile. It is a well-known fact that at home Mr. Rivi's colt is well behind his stable companion, the Jenny Howlet colt, so that his victory goes to prove that the latter is a good two year old, and that his Ascot form was all wrong. Otherwise, on the book, Florio Rubattino must be a very good colt indeed, Ayah an extraordinary filly, Champ de Mars a wonder, and Disraeli the best of the century.

OUTPOST.

ON VELVET.

WE had been discussing double events, and I had been telling how I had only once attempted to pull one off, and how I had sent to Hardaway and Topping agent the Lincoln and Grand National.

Verily my luck was out on that occasion, for I selected four horses—coupling Carrick with Comeaway on the one paper, and Lord George with Ilex on the other. As all the world knows, Lord George was successful at Lincoln, while Comeaway won at Aintree. "So you see," I concluded, "although I had spotted both winners, they were on different vouchers, and so I didn't draw." "What prices did they lay you?" asked the Boss. "Oh! I don't know," I replied, "somewhere about 80's each bet, as far as I can remember."

"Didn't you hedge the Ilex money, after Lord George

won?" he inquired, and when I said "No," he shook his head mournfully. "Ah!" said he, "that's the way with us all, till we learn wisdom. Did I ever tell you what happened," he continued, "when young Simkins ran Usurer at Four Oaks, and took me with him, just to look after his interests, don't you see? No? Well, then, I'll tell you." He took a turn or two to collect his thoughts, chucked away his cigar-end, and began:—"Usurer was in a Selling Hunters' Flat Race. We'd got a good man up—who it was doesn't matter—but I couldn't fancy his chance a little bit, considering, as I did, that we were held perfectly safe by another horse in the race. However, I didn't see why, with care, we shouldn't get our expenses, so when the numbers went up—there were seven runners, I remember—I took Simkins on one side and gave him a bit of advice.

"I don't think we shall quite win," I said, "for Smeaton will beat us, I'm afraid; still, we may get second. But, look here, if anyone comes and asks you to claim anything for him, you just refer him to me—say I'm managing the whole business, for," I added, "why should you do other people's work for nothing?" Simkins promised obedience, and had hardly done so, when up came a certain sportsman whom we all know. "Oh, Mr. Simkins," said he, "I want you to do me a favour. You're running a horse in this race. Will you claim Smeaton for me?"

"For a pony, he will," I interrupted, and as the sportsman turned, and angrily inquired what I meant by interfering (it took him quite two minutes to ask that simple question, so artistically was it embellished with weird adjectives



Photo. by W. A. Rouch. AT THE POST FOR THE ST. LEGER

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tives and such-like), Simkins quietly observed, 'Mr. Blankly is quite right—he's managing the whole business for me, and I'm entirely in his hands.'

"Oh, well," said the other, swallowing his rage, 'you'll do it, of course, won't you?'

"He will for a pony," I repeated. 'You'd be sure to do it for me, for nothing, wouldn't you?' and muttering something about 'there being more days than one,' our disappointed friend walked away in disgust.

"He'd hardly vanished in the crowd, when another whisperer approached me, after a fruitless interview with Simkins. He wished us to claim a mare called Tireless for him, and he got the same reply.

"Instead of being rude, he said he'd consult his friends, and walked away for that purpose. He soon came back, however, and, after a bit of haggling, I agreed to do what he wished for £20.

"As the horses went down to the post, I was walking towards the members' stand, when I was spotted by the late Walter Gregory, who, catching my eye, defiantly cried, '100 to 3, Usurer.' 'Pretty liberal odds,' I thought, and on his again repeating the offer, I 'shot' him, just for the sake of having an interest in the race.

"Me too?" inquired old George Ingram, and I took him also, for I thought Simkins might like a bit at such a tempting price. However, he'd only have a sovereign's worth, so that I stood to win £167 to £5—a nice bet, supposing it came off.

"I never saw a funnier race run in my life. Usurer made the whole of the running, and on coming into the straight the last time he held such a tremendous lead that the bookies were yelling for him, and it really looked as if my long shot was as good as landed.

"He tired a bit, though, when it came to breasting the hill at the finish, and Smeaton coming with a wet sail, and finishing like a lion, just got up on the post, and made a dead heat of it! Phew! what a relief it was when the numbers went up side by side, for I made sure that we had been beat, as indeed we ought to have been on our merits, and as would have been the case in another two strides.

"I felt absolutely certain that the old horse would cut it in the deciding heat, but, to my delight, the ring didn't seem to share my opinion, for they commenced operations by offering to take 7 to 4.

"My boy," he impressively continued, "comparatively speaking, it was the very best business I ever was in. I found a man I could trust, and told him to go in and lay 70 to 40, twice, or if necessary 2 to 1, to lose £160, on Smeaton, and I tried all I knew to make Simkins lay £35 to £20. But, no, he wouldn't—he said he fancied that the old horse would get home, and declared that he never knew Usurer was such a stayer.

"As I've said, I felt perfectly confident about what would happen when they ran it off, and the result proved I was perfectly right. Smeaton won anyhow—by ten lengths—and I went off to interview my commission agent.

"He'd laid 70 to 40, and 80 to 40, which, after deducting the £5, left me with the merry little balance of £75. So much for a bit of judicious hedging. We couldn't have claimed Smeaton, if we'd wanted to, as he won the race, but we *did* claim Tireless, thereby securing the promised twenty, while, as Smeaton had been entered 'to be sold for £50,' and, after we had run him up, was bought in at £200, Simkins, as owner of the second, received £75 as his share. So, you see, altogether we had a fairly satisfactory afternoon." G. B. M. PORT.

A PUPPY WALK.

THE last of the puppy shows is over by now, and nearly every pack of hounds in the country has made a start on the serious business of life.

The raw material which went out a year ago or more in the shape of an ungainly puppy, heavy of limb and clumsy of gait, has developed into the handsome, stylish foxhound. This development is due to the excellent manner in which he has been managed at walk. For in the walking of foxhound puppies a great advance has been made, and to the puppy walker belongs a good share of the credit for the general improvement which is to be found in every kennel of importance in England.

And, by the way, I would notice how curiously do people confuse terms, and how hard they are to drive from their errors, especially if it is about a sporting subject. The local paper, the good people in the neighbourhood, and hundreds of well-intentioned folk, who ought to know better, grate one's ear by speaking of the puppy show as the puppy walk, and won't be corrected. How they can make such a stupid blunder is to me a mystery, but they do make it. However, with the blunders of the ignorant we have nothing to do to-day, and it is with the puppy walk and not the social function known as the puppy walkers' luncheon that I have to deal here.

First, then, it may be laid down as an axiom that it is to the interest of a hunting man to walk a foxhound puppy, or perhaps a couple, for scarcely ever do you see a horse that belongs to a man who walks a puppy kick at a hound. To a man with a young horse, or indeed any horses, it is of the greatest importance that they should be familiar with hounds, and in no way do the two animals become so friendly as when the young foxhound sleeps in the stable and follows the hunter in his daily exercise.

There is a considerable amount of care required in the walking of a foxhound puppy, so that when he arrives at maturity he shall be the best possible; there is also no inconsiderable anxiety for the walker of the puppy during the process. Generally the young hound is taken out to quarters as soon as he can "fend for himself," as they say in Yorkshire, *i.e.*, a week or two after he has been weaned. A clumsy, ungainly-looking little object he is, and shy to boot, and he lollops about in a bewildered sort of way for a few days when he gets to his new home. But the strangeness soon wears off, and the quaint little animal begins to make friends with everyone all round, and especially with the one who feeds him. At this part of his career a plentiful supply of new milk is of course the very best thing in the world for him, but he often manages to get on pretty well without it, for in the majority of farmhouses, where, after all, the best walks are to be found, new milk is rather too scarce an article for him to be fed with for any length of time. It seems unnecessary to say that skim milk or butter milk given in large quantities, as I have known sometimes, is fatal to the perfect development of a young foxhound, for it has a tendency to make him pot-bellied. There are, however, always plenty of scraps about a farmhouse, and generous feeding is always to be met with there for man and beast. Indeed, the fare for the young foxhound is apt to err on the side of generosity.

With plentiful diet and liberty the young ungainly puppy of a few weeks ago soon begins to show those lines of beauty which distinguish him in after life, and as these lines of beauty develop he begins to grow out of favour with the female part of the household. For with increasing beauty and increasing strength there comes that delight in mischief for its own sake which springs from high health and exuberant spirits. Dish-cloths and brushes, and articles of apparel left on the grass to bleach—all is fish that comes to the net of the young foxhound. Anon, his mind takes a wider flight. He sees ducks and hens rush away with noisy haste when he approaches; what can be better fun than to chase them and pluck out a few of their tail feathers. Even the turkey-cock, whose noisy gobble frightened him a few short weeks ago, no longer has any terrors for him, and he will scatter that self-important gentleman's family without ceremony.

Now this is the critical period of the foxhound's life, and it is on the treatment he receives at this time that his future excellence mainly depends. Of course, he must not be left to work his own sweet will with the poultry, and he must be taught that linen was not made for him to pull to pieces, and that the housemaid's boots have other purposes than for him to bury, to be afterwards destroyed at his leisure. He must be firmly corrected, and if this is done in a fitting manner he will soon cease to do harm. For it is the hereditary instinct of the hound to yield to discipline. But don't break his spirit by unmerciful flogging. I once saw a domestic throw a heavy broom at a young hound that was bolting with a dish-cloth, and I never felt so inclined to give anyone a thrashing. Don't throw a heavy broom at him, but, above all, *don't shut him up.*

There is no doubt that the very best way to deal with a mischievous young hound is to get another. One would naturally think that by getting another puppy a man would add to his anxieties, and that the mischiefs would be multiplied, but this is by no means the case. The two hounds will become fast friends at once. They will chevy each other instead of cheyving the poultry, and they will probably go off on a hunting excursion or two—indeed, if there is an innocent-looking fox-terrier or two on the place they are sure to do so. But one thing should be carefully kept in mind, and that is that where a sheepdog is kept they should never be allowed to go off with him. The sheepdog is an inveterate poacher, and will teach them to hunt; he will probably also teach them to run sheep, and what is begun in play speedily develops into a serious, and perhaps incurable, vice. When a young hound shows the slightest tendency to run sheep, *send him in at once.*

Many are the ailments to which young hounds are liable, distemper being the worst, and perhaps no breed of dogs suffer so much from that terrible disease. It is always a mistake, therefore, for the puppy walker to begin any doctoring on his own account, and on the first signs of any ailing in his charge the best remedy he can apply is a post-card to the huntsman.

The puppy walker is a man whose services to sport it is difficult to over-estimate, and these services are recognised publicly by the prizes given, and by the annual luncheon. They might, however, be recognised in another way, and in a way which would be very acceptable to them. If hunting men were to call as they pass by and enquire after the welfare of the puppy, it would be a courtesy which would be highly appreciated. For men who have walked puppies for years are as proud of them as their huntsman, and nothing appeals to a man's feelings so much as sympathy with his pet hobby. And this sympathy would have another good result—it would teach a man to know, understand, and appreciate a hound, and by so doing make him a better sportsman.

RED ROVER.

TOWN TOPICS.

THE Hon. Maurice Gifford, C.M.G., who was so conspicuous a figure as he rode at the head of the Rhodesia Horse in the Jubilee Procession—having lost his right arm—is to be married on Tuesday next at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, to Miss Marguerite Thorold. It will be an interesting wedding.

The death of Sir Everett Millais, from pneumonia, caused by chill after sitting all the evening in wet clothes, should act as a warning to those who have been in the rain. Change as soon as possible, and until you can change, keep in motion. The victim to chill in this instance sat in a railway carriage and, on reaching home, sat reading. The natural result ensued, and at the age of forty-one, in spite of a splendid constitution, his life went out like the wick of a candle. He was not an artist, like his father, but was more interested in dogs. He wrote a book about them, and his kennel of Basset hounds was known to all the clubs in the kingdom. Some of the papers state that the present little baronet, aged nine, is the original of "Bubbles"; but this is a mistake. "Bubbles" is the son of Mrs. James, Sir John Millais' eldest daughter. "Bubbles" is now approaching manhood.

The little Russian Grand Duchess Olga laughed with pure delight at the talking dolls which M. Faure, the French President, gave her. One of them, dressed as a child in white muslin and pale blue surah, said, directly it was unpacked, "Bon jour, ma petite maman! What a nice dream I have had. I thought you brought me a nice doll which laughed, talked, and sang as well as I do." Another doll sang three songs:—"Malbronck s'en va-t-en guerre?" "Ah, mon beau château, la jolie Madeleine," and "Le Petit Tambour." A third is a French peasant with four different costumes—a Norman, a Béarnais, an Arles, and a Breton.

Notes from my Diary

by *maie. Sans-Gêne*

MONDAY: I am slowly but surely realising that I am getting tired of the country. It rains, and it rains, and it rains, and when it has finished raining it blows, if it does not take the liberty of doing both these unpleasant deeds at the same time. The only human beings I can see from my window are the poor unfortunate maids sent out in macintoshes to post letters.

My passion for billiards is slowly abating under the severe pressure of Tom's superior play. I have discovered that there is no number of points he cannot give me out of 100 and then beat me. My only consolation has been the investigation of the elegant trifles Nellie brought from abroad. I have forgiven her the fact that every necktie, hat, and blouse is plaid of some description, though I did venture once to remonstrate with her on the monotonous similarity of her selections, and then offered to relieve her of some of the ties, in order that she would be able to introduce a little variety into her possessions.

We shall have seriously to face the fact of the popularity of plaid. Prophetically, I can see the appalling combinations of huge checks with which portly English matrons will decorate their portly English figures. Plaid is acceptable enough in its way—indeed, I adore it—but it must be used with discretion. Green plaid, which I love dearly, looks well made into a skirt when cut on the cross and completed with a plaid silk or velvet bodice. Any bodice of plaid should be of an infinitesimal check, and should not be elaborated with trimming, but made on the plainest principles of shirt tendency. Plaid silk looks well hemmed with black satin ribbon made into a coat bodice with a white front—it is one of the admirable exceptions to the rule of simple plaid blouses. Green or blue velvet toques trimmed with cock's feathers or ostrich feathers are the best complement to shirts of plaid, and Nellie tells me attractive tales of chiffon trimmings on velvet hats, and also assures me that one of the most popular decorations for millinery during the early autumn will be the feather pompom. She brought from Paris such a pretty tam-o-shanter of chestnut brown velvet, with a group of brown and pale blue feather pompoms at one side clustering at the base of a couple of eagle quills.

Nellie also bought an elaborate theatre cloak. Tom yearning to have the privilege of buying her something to wear, she indulged his craving expensively. It is of black crêpe de chine, lined with pale blue, and it is embroidered in floss silk with many coloured roses, this embroidery being cleverly used down the centre of the back, round the hem, and round the sleeves. Many ruffings of pale blue chiffon, edged with lace, are gathered round the neck to fall almost in boa fashion down the front. I should think Nellie would very soon satisfy Tom's craving to buy her something to wear—I am told on reliable authority such desire on the part of husbands seldom outlasts the honeymoon, this not being one of the cases where appetite comes with eating.

WEDNESDAY: I really could not stand it any longer—the persistent rain dropping from the trees on to the gravel path beneath my window fell in its transit on my nerves, so I came up to town to-day, and town, strangely enough, was a blaze of sunlight. The atmosphere was comparatively warm, the streets had lost their deserted air, and, although clearly thronged with soulless persons ignorant of the best art of clothing, yet were more attractive than the country lanes in a rain storm. Of clothes there are a few worthy of notice in the shops, these, when of cloth or silk, mostly exhibiting a trimming of appliqué guipure or brocade. Silken flowers are worked on to silken fabrics in a manner very marvellous and very dear. The soft vicuna cloths offer themselves once again for our affections, which are, however, very likely to be secured by the plain face cloth, for this is the material which sets best as a skirt cut on the new principles, close clinging to the figure, and velveteen is another fabric

which will also lend itself amiably to such manipulation. Some of the new shades of velveteen are delightful, but especially those marked "Liberty," but this is really a fabric pre-eminently suited for tea-gowns or evening dresses, while it offers most superior advantages for frocks and costumes for little girls.



BROCADED THEATRE CLOAK TRIMMED WITH LACE

I wandered into the International Fur Stores, 163, Regent Street, this afternoon to see the new fashions in the always delightful sealskin. I like the way these people cut their furs—they treat them with as much consideration as the tailor bestows upon cloth, and they really induce them to fit the figure, while they contrive to stamp a fashionable up-to-dateness upon their every detail. I wanted to try and persuade them to rearrange my last year's jacket according to this year's mode, and

ultimately brought them to my views, which include a facing of ermine, small draped revers at the neck, just a small cuff on the sleeves, and a lining of the same ermine to the high collar. Fashion ordains this year that ermine is to bestow its influence on all the dark furs, and this looks perfectly charming used as revers and collar and trimmings to jackets of broad-tail. Broad-tail is a fur which will amiably fit to the figure and exercise a becoming influence upon it.

The newest form of sealskin coat is pouched and faced with ermine, and boasts a jewelled belt round the waist and a basque, which can be worn or dispensed with at will.

An ideal theatre wrap at the International Fur Stores is of circular form in purple velvet, with a lining and facing of ermine, bordered with a narrow line of sable.

White caracule and white broad-tail are also in evidence. Altogether, under the influence of the International Fur Stores the stigma of dowdiness may be for ever removed from fur garments.

There is very little else new in the land. Jet is to be exceedingly popular, and most beautiful evening gowns are entirely made of black net, thickly traced with paillettes in jet. The bodice sleeves and skirt are all made of the same, and the effect is most adorable. I am wondering now whether I am justified, considering the present empty condition of my wardrobe and the moderate amount at my bankers, in ordering one of those jet dresses.

I saw one pretty toque to-day made of three different shades of violet velvet, set into little frills, scalloped at the edge and machine stitched. This looked like a violet poppy, and was trimmed at one side with a violet feather. The toques of this season are all to be made of velvet, and, so I am told by the extravagant, are the dresses—herein there is cause for reflection, that perhaps it would be as well not to dissipate all my money on an evening frock.



BURNT STRAW HAT, WITH PALE BLUE FEATHERS AND SPOTTED NET

IN THE GARDEN.

THE perennial Asters are known both as Starworts and Michaelmas Daisies. We prefer the name Starworts, the flowers like stars on the willowy stems.

This family has been alluded to before in COUNTRY LIFE, but at the present season they are in flower, and deserve again more than passing mention. No family is so hardy and free as this, or richer in beautiful varieties. The flowers are cool and varied in colour, as soft and subtle as the changing tints that give a new aspect to the garden in autumn. The writer wishes the Starworts were better used. They are not plants to bunch up like a cornstack, or to set in regimental line at the back of a border, but to plant in bold, free groups, unfettered by other things.

PROPER PLANTING OF STARWORTS.

To give our readers an idea of what is meant by "bold, free groups," a garden in which Starworts are a cloud of colour during September days may well be described. The garden is large and therefore capable of containing



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[IN KEW GARDENS.]

"Country Life."

masses of one subject, and many readers of COUNTRY LIFE have gardens even larger, and, if smaller, the Starworts may be made the chief feature of autumn. In the garden alluded to there are groups of evergreen shrubs, and clumps, too, of Perennial Sunflowers. Amongst the shrubs the Starworts are planted, and at this time throw over them graceful flower shoots, which possess a charm the true artist seeks. The writer has seen many good pictures in which Starworts planted in this free way have formed the subject. Colours cool and varied the flowers seem to pour out, and a spicy fragrance scents the air. Grouped with the rich yellow Sunflowers of the autumn—Helianthus, Miss Melish, letiflorus, and others—the Starworts are also happy in colour, or clustering against some sombre fir spreading its branches against the sky. A glorious picture may be painted with flowers where the garden contains a group of fir whose sombre colouring mingles with the rich tints of the Starwort. We saw a few years ago such an effect. Near a colony of fir and on a slope running into meadowland two dwarf Starworts were planted, Aster acris and A. Amellus bessarabicus; the former has pale lilac flowers in profusion and the latter deep purple rays, large, and handsome in form and colour. Neither plant was quite two feet—a surface in early September of beautiful colouring which carried the eye to the deep green plummy branches of the fir. This is the kind of planting those readers of COUNTRY LIFE who have the opportunity should try.

REQUIREMENTS OF STARWORTS.

Few hardy plants are so easy to grow as these. It is always wise to divide the plants when growth is commencing in spring, not to raise seedlings unless new forms are desired. Seed cannot be trusted to reproduce faithfully the parent. Bees prevent this, and on the Starworts they feast when summer flowers have flown. After three or four years the plants derive benefit from transplanting, as the growth becomes in time matted and weak. Ordinary garden soil will suffice, but where the plants are placed amongst shrubs, well rotted manure applied each year will be helpful.

THE BEST APRICOTS.

The most delicious Apricot of all is the variety Moorpark, and it is the kind most planted. Unfortunately it is terribly subject to sudden collapse, probably through being grafted upon an unsuitable stock. Hemskirk is less free from this objectionable character, although the fruit is not quite so richly flavoured. Royal Orange and the Peach Apricot are two good varieties.

HYDRANGEAS BY THE SEA.

In the warmer coast gardens of England the Hydrangea flowers abundantly. It is seldom hurt by frost, and is so fine a flowering shrub that we regret its absence from many places to which it would add much beauty. One can scarcely realise its splendour from the pot plants seen in greenhouses.

FUCHSIA RICCARTONI.

Another beautiful flowering shrub is this Fuchsia. Its slender shoots are and have been for some weeks past brightened with slender crimson flowers, which hang daintily from every joint. It is one of the hardiest of the family, seldom suffering even in severe winters. If cut down, new growth will shoot from the base again in spring.

GATHERING SEEDS.

Gather seeds before they fall to the ground. Watch every plant seed is required from, otherwise it will be lost.

THE LARGE POND IN THE ROYAL GARDENS, KEW.

The surroundings of the large pond in the Royal Gardens, Kew, show the good effect of planting bold-leaved things, such as the Gunnera and graceful Water-Grasses, or those that are most happy in moisture. The tropical Water-Lily house, which is situated near the pond, the writer thinks is one of the most interesting of all the plant structures at Kew. Besides the Nymphaeas—the blue flowers of *N. zanzibarensis* like sapphires resting on the surface—quaint tropical gourds, Sacred Bean (*Nelumbium*), and other famous flowers of Eastern lands grow in profusion, the *Nelumbium* flourishing in warm mud and the gourds rambling over rafter and roof. During the winter these plants have gone to rest and the house is closed, but on a summer afternoon they are in full beauty.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—With a view to assist our readers in gardening as much as possible, we shall be pleased to answer any questions on flowers, fruits, vegetables, or the laying out of gardens, addressed to the Editor. An addressed stamped envelope must be enclosed for reply.